

TENTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

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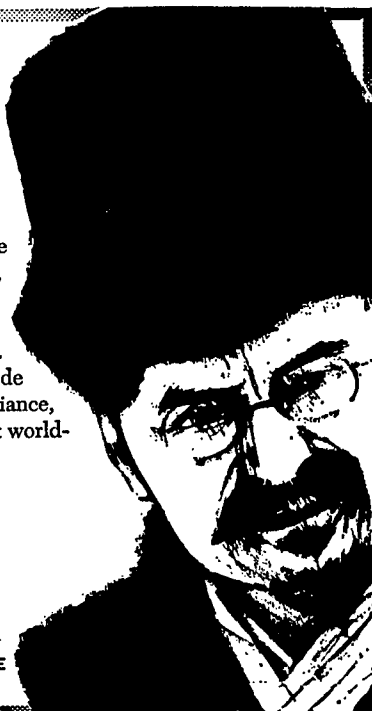
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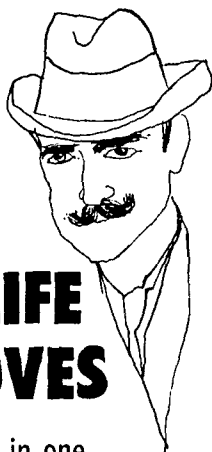
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Norman Thomas

a few words of greeting

It has been a great achievement to have kept DISSENT going in this country these ten confused and difficult years. I can say this and applaud the value of our magazine in all humility, since my own part in it has been so small.

That we should continue to support it goes without saying at this time when democratic socialism, necessarily of a nondogmatic kind, is at once so essential an answer to our problems, and so little regarded by articulate liberals, to say nothing of the general public.

In my traveling and speaking, especially at colleges and universities, I meet an increasing number of questions which go beyond the rather naive and uninformed average. They ask how our modern socialism differs from the New Deal, Welfare State, liberalism; what socialism has to offer in the face of the population explosion, the onrush of automation, poverty in our affluent society, civil rights, the arms economy, and the foreign policy on which war or peace depends.

Most of these questions can by no means be answered simply by texts out of Marx. Still less can we thus answer the stock questions: Why is labor so indifferent or opposed to socialism? Why is there no stronger Socialist party if socialism is the world's hope? It is interesting to observe that the civil rights campaign, and now the official, newly-proclaimed "war on poverty" have challenged the assumptions that we live in the best of possible Americas—often in what is held to be the worst of possible, Communist-polluted worlds. Yet these new concerns have scarcely brought any rush into socialist ranks. Let me enumerate some of the reasons which go deeper than calling down curses on the success of mass propaganda by an owning class:

1—The generally accepted belief that American workers are better off than the workers of any country under socialist or communist rule. One cannot issue a blanket denial of this fact even if one cites the greater fringe benefits in many lands, the advantages of socialized medicine, the substantial material achievements of communism in Russia and China after the great destruction of war.

2—A greater challenge to our conventional socialist expectations is the economic progress of defeated Japan and West Germany, and war-ravaged France and Italy under an economy quite different from Marx's. It is not enough to point out also how different it is from Adam Smith's. The devastation of World War II in what were the most advanced capitalist countries was not followed by the triumph of socialism. Marx's orderly, foreordained movement from feudalism through capitalism to socialism hasn't happened.

3—At the present time the population explosion creates problems that cannot be solved by a socialism indifferent to them. On this subject Malthus was more right than Marx, though neither foresaw the situation as we are forced to see it.

4—Our own country, most affluent of nations and most advanced industrially, is faced with problems undreamed of as late, let us say, as the Great Depression. They are (a) the effect of a cold war economy on the general economic scene; (b) the effect of automation; and (c) the fact that the civil rights revolution with its imperative and rightful demand for equality of job opportunity coincides with a diminishing demand for workers, especially in the unskilled and semi-skilled lines where once the demand was greatest. Again there is not too much specific help in our older socialist texts. Nationalization of itself will not solve these problems, nor will economic change automatically wipe out race prejudice.

5—Socialist internationalism, emotionally so strong before World War I, while by no means dead today, has not made any such contribution to peace in the strife and confusion of the years since 1914 as some of us had hoped. For reasons not hard to understand, Paul-Henri Spaak's famous remark contains much truth: The thing that Socialists have nationalized best is socialism.

We socialists can and should acknowledge these facts and then go on to say that we are in a far better position to deal with the problems they present than our capitalist critics. Nothing is more certain than that long-range planning, economic and political, is necessary to our life. Our science, our technology, our growth in population make it inescapable. We shall not have peace in an anarchy of 120 absolutely sovereign nations in an interdependent world unless there is a socialist type of internationalism in politics and economics. Within the United States, laissez-faire economies and weak government have proved unable to deal with as vital a problem as health. Where would we be if wholly dependent on the mercies of the AMA, the "ethical" drug industry, and Madison Avenue advertisers? (One of the outstanding tri-

umphs of lobbying is the success of the AMA not only in defeating approaches to socialized medicine, but in discrediting it in the minds of so many people.)

It is commonplace that a highway system, education, the provision of water for a society insatiably demanding it, require government planning and action. The action has required a steadily increased degree of public ownership. Since my youth capitalist free enterprise has steadily diminished before great corporations and government. More and more college and university graduates look for jobs, not openings for private enterprise. Yet in my lifetime, it has become the fashion to defend the American system, not in terms of capitalism vs. socialism, but "free enterprise" vs. socialism. In my own experience, in debating the theme, it was Wendell Wilkie who gave the great impetus to the substitution of "free enterprise" for capitalism—he was then head of a dubiously ethical private "public" utility corporation. His concern, he said, was for "freedom"—in action pretty much the sort of freedom a college boy in Illinois told me that he stood for in opposition to socialism; namely, "my right to try to be as rich as Paul Getty"—a gentleman whose vast wealth derives from no corresponding service to society, but from astute manipulation of oil stocks.

The curious thing is that capitalism posing as free enterprise is so very far from free—farther than in my youth when it didn't boast of freedom but rested its case on the adequacy of the profit motive to inspire all essential economic action. Let me quote once more our friend Aaron Levenstein's classic observation that the "only genuine practitioners of free enterprise are small boys playing marbles for keeps." They have no subsidies, tariffs, parity payments, social security, guaranteed collective bargaining—nothing but their marbles. And someone always loses.

Our estimate of the power of capitalism to adjust itself to the times—chiefly by appropriating or accepting measures it had previously damned as socialist—may have been too low. Our hopes of men's capacity rapidly to develop the attitudes and the social machinery essential to a virile socialist society may have been too high. But what has happened in the convulsions that began with World War I and now attend the revolution of rising expectations, makes it ever more manifest that our civilization, perhaps the very life of our race in a thermonuclear age, will depend on the application of two fundamental socialist principles: The first is that the main principle of our economy must be a conscious planning for production for the use of all earth's children. Such planning may make considerable use of the profit-price

system; but it cannot be devoted to saving as much private profit as possible. It must be consciously based on the use of automation and modern technology generally to give us for the first time in man's life on this planet an economy of abundance.

The second great socialist ideal which must be adopted and adapted is internationalism. It was expressed in the call for the workers of the world to unite. It is true that workers in more advanced industrial nations now have something more than their chains. But they and their comrades the world over still have a fraternity of peace and freedom and plenty to win. May *DISSENT* live many years to elaborate this truth and win support for it.

Irving Howe

the first ten years

This magazine was begun in the hope that it would survive at least a year. It has lasted ten. And it is going stronger than ever.

Our paid circulation is at the highest point since we began; our influence, so far as we can judge, is also; and so is our morale. The editorial board functions with good spirit and sharp criticism. Even—but don't make too much of it—our finances are a trifle better than in the past: they are merely critical.

For a little magazine this is notable; for a little magazine of socialist persuasion it is remarkable; for a little magazine of socialist persuasion in the 1950s and 1960s it is phenomenal. We are happy and, for just a moment, permit ourselves some pride. We thank those writers who have sent us their work, and for whom publication in our pages has meant a loss of income they could gain elsewhere. We thank our readers, those who have helped us every two years with financial contributions, those who speak about the magazine, those who are content simply to read it.

A great deal has changed since we began to publish. The compulsive anti-radicalism, the sickening complacency, the readiness to join in celebrating the virtues of American capitalism, the Cold War hys-

terics—all these have lessened, in some instances disappeared, among American intellectuals, among the more political circles of the labor movement, and among reflective people in general. Sobriety and doubt have replaced the trumped-up euphoria of the early 1950s, and from sobriety and doubt there has followed a recognition that the social problems of this country have not been solved and that, on the contrary, new and severe ones have begun to appear. There follows, also, a recognition that the retreat to “privatism” was both unwarranted and insensitive; that we all have work to do in this world; and that, in however modest a way, we *can* influence the changing directions of thought and perhaps events.

Consider the question of poverty. Ten years ago we were mocked and scorned for insisting that poverty remained a major problem in the United States; it was a symptom, we were told, of our “nostalgia for the thirties” to talk about such matters. Today, everyone knows that poverty is an urgent problem, and an important reason for that awareness is the work of one of our editors, who brought together and developed the kinds of material that eight or nine years ago were appearing in *DISSENT* and other socialist publications.

But more than a specific social ill is at stake here. The whole idea of fundamental social change, of a new society that would be democratically structured in both politics and economics, a society planned for the needs of men rather than subject to the fetishes of the past—this begins to take on a new meaning today, a revived and stronger meaning, as it becomes clear that things go badly, the values of competitive society are dismal, the distribution of goods and power is unjust.

We are glad to have stuck by the fundamental outlook of democratic radicalism, and glad, as well, to have tried to abandon those elements of traditional ideology which came to seem obsolete or mistaken. We have not, to be sure, reconstructed that new synthesis of socialist thought which we had fondly, indeed naively, hoped to reach; but it now seems clear to us that this goal, valuable as it remains, will not be reached easily or quickly. It will be a matter of new experiences, new problems, new generations.

The magazine has had its faults, and we know them well. It has suffered from uncertainties, from vagueness, from poor writing, from portentousness—at times. But it has also published an impressive body of work both in political analysis and topical reporting: you need only look through *Voices of Dissent*, the book collecting the best pieces of our first five years; or the several special issues we have put out, such as those on New York City, Africa, the American trade unions, academic life; or the series dealing with American social problems which we will be publishing under the general title of *The Radical Papers*, first in the magazine itself and then as a book.

Something else: The kind of tight-knit "community" of writers and friends, extending beyond the immediate circle of our editorial board, that we had in mind at the beginning, has not quite been built up. But on reflection I do not find this very dismaying. For in the last few years, wherever I have gone in the United States, I have found friends and co-workers, some *Dissenters* closely attached to the magazine and many more dissenters who share our general outlook and carry out the ideas we advance. In the civil rights movement, our friends work hard and well, making real the values of democratic socialism. I attend a teachers union meeting and find a dissenter building a fine organization. Wherever there is work to be done for justice and freedom, there Norman Thomas, our friend and inspiration, is to be found. Books keep coming out, some of them with material that had appeared in our pages, some obviously influenced by our work.

It does not yet add up, of course, to the kind of new democratic radical movement we should like to see in this country. But our friends and ourselves continue to do what needs to be and can be done, trying to remain firm in our values and free in our thought.

We now enter our second decade, full of plans and hopes. We shall give as much as we can of our energy, thought and time; and we know that our friends will help.

A TYPOGRAPHICAL IMPROVEMENT

Readers of *DISSENT* will notice that this issue is easier to read than previous ones. The reason is that we have "opened" the slug on which each line of type is cast from 11 to 12 points, for most of our articles, and decreased the number of lines of type on each page from 44 to 42. That means a page which is considerably easier on the eye, though also a loss of almost ten per cent in the quantity of material printed. We are making this change because some readers have complained, justly, that our pages in the past were very difficult for the eye to manage. Perhaps if circulation warrants it, we'll be able to compensate for the loss of material by adding a few extra pages. And if the typographical change isn't sufficiently radical, we'll try others as we go along. Your comments would be appreciated.—EDITORS.

DISSENT

VOLUME XI

NUMBER 2

SPRING 1964

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Irving Howe

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A QUARTERLY OF
SOCIALIST OPINION

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THE TRIPLE REVOLUTION

Introductory Note

In late March there was released in Washington a statement called "The Triple Revolution," prepared by W. H. Ferry, associated with the Fund for the Republic, Gerald Piel, the science writer, and Robert Theobald, the economist. This policy statement was signed by a number of prominent political analysts such as Seymour Melman and H. Stuart Hughes, by the civil rights leader Bayard Rustin, and also by the trade union leader Ralph Helstein. Among other signatories were DISSENT editors Irving Howe and Michael Harrington, and the economist Ben Seligman, who contributes frequently to our pages.

The statement, too long for complete publication here, began with an analysis of "The Cybernation Revolution" which "results in a system of almost unlimited productive capacity requiring progressively less human labor"; "The Weapons Revolution," which leads to the possibility of obliterating civilization but not winning wars; and "The Human Rights Revolution." After analyzing the consequences and inter-relation of these developments, the statement proceeds to specific proposals—the bulk of which we print below:

Proposal for Action

As a first step, it is essential to recognize that the traditional link between jobs and incomes is being broken. The economy of abundance can sustain all citizens in comfort and economic security whether or not they engage in what is commonly reckoned as work. Wealth produced by machines rather than by men is still wealth. We urge, therefore, that society, through its appropriate legal and governmental institutions, undertake an unqualified commitment to provide every in-

dividual and every family with an adequate income as a matter of right. This undertaking we consider to be essential to the emerging economic, social and political order in this country. We regard it as the only policy by which the quarter of the nation now dispossessed and soon-to-be dispossessed by lack of employment can be brought within the abundant society. The unqualified right to an income would take the place of the patchwork of welfare measures—from unemployment insurance to relief—de-

continued on page 229

JOURNAL OF THE QUARTER

Some Doubts on the Warren Commission

When the Warren Commission to investigate President Kennedy's assassination was first appointed, there seemed reason to feel a certain confidence in its work. The announced purpose of the Commission—to get to the very bottom of the tragedy—together with at least some of its personnel, led most of us to anticipate that a full and fair investigation would be held, in which every possible clue would be followed up.

Four baffling months later it is hard to feel the same confidence. To label the Commission a failure may be premature, but there is by now sufficient ground for subjecting it to severe criticism.

- The Commission got off to a poor start when its chairman, Chief Justice Earl Warren, announced that most of its findings might never be divulged because these touched on matters of national security, and then a few days later blithely declared that his announcement had merely been “facetious.” That seemed a hell of a way of launching a full-scale investigation into the outstanding political crime of recent years! For the truth is that the Warren statement, despite his subsequent lame and utterly unpersuasive repudiation, reinforced the many rumors to the effect that various official and semi-official governmental agencies, supposedly either involved

with Oswald or negligent in Dallas, would be spared the hard light of public exposure.

- The secrecy in which the hearings have been held, together with an obvious *calculated* leakage of unconfirmed reports, and also the curious treatment of Marina Oswald—all these leave one uneasy.

- The Commission, by its own announcement, will not strike out on an independent investigation of its own, taking nothing for granted—especially, not taking for granted either the guilt of Oswald or the protestations of the FBI and CIA that Oswald was never connected with either agency. On the contrary, the Commission has apparently relied most on material submitted to it by the very agencies that should themselves also be the object of critical inspection. And this holds not merely for federal agencies, but even more so, for the fabulously incompetent or careless (*or worse*) Dallas police department. By announcing in advance that it does not intend to investigate or criticize any governmental agency, the Commission seriously undercuts the ground for confidence in its thoroughness and fearlessness.

- The Commission has not, so far as one can tell, sufficiently protected the rights of the accused murderer. One is hardly inspired to feel that it

is proceeding with exemplary fairness when it appoints an ultra-conservative lawyer as legal representative of Oswald.

- While the Commission has, so far as one can tell, thus far failed to investigate thoroughly the Dallas police and the numerous contradictions of its testimony, it has brought to public attention Mrs. Marina Oswald who, after months of unexplained isolation in the hands of law-enforcement agencies, announced in Washington her belief that her husband was guilty of the murder. She may be right; nevertheless, this is a highly prejudicial and even propagandistic procedure.

In a word, then, the Commission began with a tacit acceptance of the "official" version of the case and thereby left open the possibility that it would not, as had at first been promised, get "to the bottom of everything." What makes this all the more dubious is the publication in the *April Commentary* of a disturbing article by Leo Sauvage, a responsible French journalist who covers American affairs, in which he raises a great many detailed questions about the assassination and the methods of the Dallas authorities. At the very least, Mr. Sauvage convinces one that the bungling of the Dallas authorities was monumental; had they intended to deceive in some way, they could not have been more irresponsible than they were. At the most, Mr. Sauvage convinces one that until a full investigation is held there can be no *definitive* ground for declaring Oswald the assassin.

We would therefore propose:

- *An immediate end to the secret hearings. The investigation should be held in public, and executive sessions held only when there are urgent security reasons, as is the case with Congressional investigating Committees. (By "security reasons" we mean matters of peace and war, not the power or prestige of the CIA and FBI.)*

- *Publication of all documents and testimony received thus far, but without any interim conclusions.*

- *A declaration by the Commission that it intends to follow up every lead, no matter where it may point.*

- *A final public review of the case, open to the press and competent legal representatives, at which the evidence would be summarized, unsolved problems frankly acknowledged, and critical questions answered.*

Anything less, in our opinion, will only leave a haze of doubt, uncertainty and rumor. A packaged final report by the Commission, in view of

Douglas MacArthur—Jack D. Ripper
or Again, Art Copies Nature

Reading the weird posthumous revelation of General MacArthur's proposal during the Korean War to drop 30 to 50 atom bombs on China and seal the Korean border by a radioactive cobalt belt and force the Russians into an atomic confrontation, one wonders:

Are there still people around who think that *Dr. Strangelove* was a wild and unwarranted exaggeration, beyond the bounds of permissible esthetic distortion?

I. H.

all that has already happened, will no longer be sufficient.

STANLEY PLASTIK

P.S. It follows that, apart from all

other reasons, the death sentence of Jack Ruby should not be carried out, for there remains the possibility that certain evidence, suppressed or neglected, could be had only from him.

Not All Black

As if their burdens were not overwhelming enough, the leaders of the civil rights movement have had to face a central pessimism at the heart of the Negro revolution. Like his fellow whites at the bottom of the economic pyramid, the American Negro has it driven into his consciousness by the great leveler, television, that the American way of life expects him to change his brand of cigarettes regularly, drink more beer, purchase instant color cameras, take off for Bermuda by jet, and enjoy an ultra-modern kitchen.

Such overwhelming symbols of affluence have emphasized to the underprivileged the ambiguity of the Negro protest. The *New York Times*, describing Negro-white relations in the city, quoted a Negro worker as saying:

All this hollerin' don't mean nothing to me. All them Negroes who are doing it hope to git something for themselves. All this stuff don't help people like me. I'm going to be working in a laundry all my life and there's no way to git out of it.

What the laundry worker's comment would seem to indicate is that despite the courage, the militance, and the capacity of the civil rights demon-

strators to capture the spirit of protest, the movement may end in disappointment. The reason, paradoxically, is that the movement may achieve a few immediate goals while nothing really changes for the Negro mass aside from an improvement in the atmosphere in which the struggle continues.

A number of Negro leaders have put their fingers on the heart of the problem. In the South, what has prevented even a pro forma elimination of racial barriers on the Northern pattern has been the existence of the white "power structure." In the context of the established Southern community, this phrase blankets the dominant business groups, city officials, local judges, police and newspapers. Given the cronyism characteristic of the American city structure—a factor even more pronounced in the typical Southern city—this interlocking group forms a massive concentration of power. It is a tribute to the gallantry of Southern Negro demonstrators that they have challenged head-on the economic and legal strength vested in the white power structure.

At this point the Negro revolution—if it must act alone—faces its most formidable obstacle. For the white

power structure is not limited to the South. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee has pointed out that the ten major industries in Birmingham, scene of some of the most vicious anti-Negro outbursts, are fundamentally controlled by such Northern corporations as U.S. Steel, the St. Regis Paper Co., U.S. Pipe and Foundry, Republic Steel, Union Carbide. The silence and inaction of these corporations according to SNCC, contributed to the Birmingham attacks on civil rights groups. To the indictment that U.S. Steel might have used its dominant role in the Birmingham economy to effect some changes in the city's segregated pattern, Roger Blough, chairman of the board, replied that he was surprised to find that U.S. Steel was being requested to become involved in a socially tense situation, oblivious of the fact, apparently, that corporations were now endowed by academic commentators with social consciences which should have pricked him to just such a duty.

The Southern way of life is not so remote from the American mainstream as is generally believed. The white "power structure," to the extent that it describes the identity of interests that binds major business concerns and governmental agencies, is not so much a racial designation as a statement of economic fact. The intensity of the Negro protest has emphasized the fact that ultimately the challenge is being posed to the *status quo*, even if the civil rights groups have not asserted it in those terms.

Because the Negro protest is bound up so closely to the question of poverty, it confronts an economic power structure whose strength has hardly

eroded during the period of the boom. The AFL-CIO Executive Council offers the following analysis:

The income share of the wealthiest 20 per cent of American families rose between 1955 and 1960—particularly after account is taken of capital gains and expense-account living. At the same time, the share of wealth of the richest families has been climbing. The share of all personally held wealth of the nation's richest one per cent of families rose steadily from 24 per cent in 1953 to 26 per cent in 1956 to 28 per cent in 1961, according to Robert J. Lampman's study of wealth-holding in the United States. The number of millionaires rose from 27,000 in 1953 to 100,000 in 1961, according to Lampman. And the very rich—with holdings of 5 million or more—increased 500 per cent, from 2,000 to about 10,000. These unbalanced trends in income have helped to throw the economy out of balance. . . . The rising unemployment and part-time work, as well as the inequitable trend in income distribution and the persistent pockets of poverty, have contributed, in turn, to a vicious cycle that dampens down needed increases in demand. This cycle must be broken.

Unfortunately, neither the AFL-CIO economic program nor the recommendations of liberal economists on the edge of the New Frontier seem on the verge of adoption, though they are hardly powerful enough to break the cycle of maldistribution. Even the earlier prescription of Prof. Galbraith to put the unemployed on a permanent dole—humane as the motive may be—has an aura of desperation, as if in the end the best that can be wheedled out of the economic power group is another form of charity, supplied out of government, not cor-

porate, funds. If the Galbraith formula is vulnerable to the criticism that creating a sector of non-affluent pariahs would provoke a new set of volatile social problems, it is radical by comparison to the suggestions that have emanated from the New Frontier advisers. The one innovation has been the recommendation for an Appalachian regional development plan. For the rest, there has been only the vaunted war on poverty and total commitment to the tax cut law, which could only be gotten through Congress after being augmented by half a dozen new loopholes for businessmen who found the across-the-board tax remissions insufficiently generous. It is one of the typical ironies of the New Frontier that its most emphatic contribution to economic change to date would have been howled down as Republican class legislation if submitted during the Eisenhower administration.

Somewhat more visionary suggestions have come from those not so closely allied with the administration. A. A. Berle has remarked casually that, whenever "we" wanted to, it would be a simple matter to divert \$35 billion from Gross National Product to raise the income of the underprivileged. More recently, Prof. Galbraith has suggested a crash program to educate the children in 100 of the most depressed areas of the country, thus apparently lending support to a thesis advanced early in the century by the Russian-Polish revolutionary Wacław Machajski who, we are told by Max Nomad, asserted that in modern society education was capital. There is, then, no dearth of suggestions as to how some of the wealth pouring out

of the American economy may be used for the alleviation of distress. But the latter, like the recommendations, remains unattended to.

Wiping out poverty in the country has resisted all attempts to talk it away. What gives point to the civil rights leaders' criticism of the power structure is that it makes clear the basic inequality in the distribution of wealth, which would be unimpaired even if the whole range of suggestions for the amelioration of distress were put into effect. While Negro spokesmen such as A. Philip Randolph have linked the Negro protest to the need for dealing with the worst aspects of poverty, it would be too much to expect that the lead for such a comprehensive program would come from the civil rights groups. Negroes are a minority too among the 30 to 40 million in the United States whose lives are submerged in poverty. It is the obvious responsibility of black and white leaders in the labor, radical and liberal community to offer the challenge to an economic and social structure which sustains such impoverishment in the face of an unprecedented boom.

The civil rights movement has, by implication, called into question the purpose of the vast outpouring of goods, and has questioned whether it is enough to keep the boom going as an end in itself. The movement has dramatized not only the social discrepancies that lie at the center of the American power structure, but the economic inequality at its base. The challenge of the civil rights revolution is thus actually all-encompassing, and the obligation to extend it rests not on Negroes alone.

HERMAN SINGER

R. H. Tawney

SOCIALISM AND FREEDOM

The late R. H. Tawney—the distinguished British historian known for his Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, and at the same time a prominent British Socialist known for his The Acquisitive Society and Equality—died in 1963. His friends in England, as a tribute to his career, brought together a number of his best essays under the title The Radical Tradition; this spring the book will be published in the United States by Pantheon Books, through whose kind permission we here print several excerpts. Tawney, described in the book by Hugh Gaitskell as “the Democratic Socialist par excellence,” was steadily concerned with the relationship of socialism and freedom; and it seems appropriate, on the tenth anniversary of this journal, to bring together a small anthology of his reflections on this topic.—ED.

Freedom and Government

The increase in the freedom of ordinary men and women during the last two generations has taken place, not in spite of the action of Governments, but because of it. It has been due to the fact that, once political democracy had found its feet, popularly elected chambers began, under the pressure of their electors, to prescribe minimum standards of life and work, to extend public services, to pool surplus wealth and employ it for the common good, to confer a legal status on trade unions, and generally to treat their economically weaker citizens as human beings entitled to the opportunities, advantages, and security against unmerited misfortune, which had previously been confined to the economically strong. The mother of liberty has, in fact, been law.

That process was for long carried forward hesitatingly and with reluctance, by Governments which only half believed in it. . . . It involves, of course, a substantial enlargement of the activities of public bodies; and it is here, in the debatable land between economics and politics, that the counter-attack is launched. The present writer . . . does

not, to his shame, study the works of economic theorists with the assiduity that they deserve, for the reason—if it is a reason and not mere weakness of the flesh—explained to her pupil by the school-mistress in that ancient, but admirable play, *The Importance of Being Earnest*: “Do not read Mill’s chapter on the fall of the rupee, my dear; it is too exciting for a young girl.” If his esteemed colleague, the author of *The Road to Serfdom*, had confined himself to a forecast of the economic catastrophe threatened by socialism, he cannot say that, like the devils in Scripture, he would have believed and trembled; but he would certainly have trembled even while he disbelieved. Professor von Hayek has chosen as his target, however, not the economics of socialism, but the political and cultural nemesis which, he is convinced, it entails. His curtain falls on a world in which personal liberty, freedom of thought and speech, tolerance, objective science, private and public morality, have one by one, as socialism advances, been ruthlessly extinguished, and universal darkness covers all. It is, perhaps, not presumptuous, therefore, for one of the prospective serfs to hazard an opinion on the doom awaiting him.

The villain in Professor von Hayek’s tragedy is, of course, the Planning and Organizing State. On his conception of planning it is needless to dwell, since it is not one which any British socialist of standing has ever accepted. Professor von Hayek, it would appear, understands by the term a comprehensive program, embracing the whole range of economic activities, under which the quantity and quality of every article to be produced, from steel-plants to pins, and the occupation and payment of every individual, are prescribed in advance for a term of years by a central authority—an authority uninfluenced by the views of consumers or producers, acknowledging no responsibility, however indirect, to a representative assembly, and conducting its affairs by the issue of orders, the infringement of which is a criminal offense. Given these assumptions, it is not surprising that a Totalitarian monster should emerge as his conclusion, since he has been at pains to include Totalitarianism among his premises.

The version of planning expounded by him is, doubtless, a possible one, and his readers should be grateful to him for developing its implications. To imply, however, as Professor von Hayek appears to do, that the procedure whose horrifying consequences he portrays with such force alone needs to be considered, or that all other procedures must necessarily lead to the same fatal goal, is to beg all questions. If, as is commonly held by British socialists, the essential characteristic of a planned economy consists, not as Professor von Hayek seems to suggest,

in a detailed budget of production, but in the transference for the responsibility for the higher ranges of economic strategy from profit-making entrepreneurs to a national authority, his mystery of iniquity is attenuated to a mare's nest and his bloodthirsty Leviathan becomes a servicable drudge. It is not easy to specify what, if any, liberties would be jeopardized by the substitution of such an authority, pursuing, with full responsibility to the Cabinet and through it, to Parliament, a deliberate production and investment policy, for a group of large combines or a welter of small firms. In so far as freedom depends on the ability of a society to determine, within the limits set by nature, the character of the economic régime under which it shall live, it seems reasonable to say that it would be substantially increased.

Economic liberties are neither the only, nor the most important, liberties. The conventional retort to such arguments is to accuse those who advance them of a soulless materialism. The serfs, it is said, might be less uncomfortable; but, as cogs in the mechanism of an authoritarian state they would have bartered their dignity as citizens and men—their initiative, their responsibility, their right to live their own lives and wreck them if they pleased—for a shot of morphia in the soul. It is obvious that, if a despotic government enlarges its control over economic affairs, it will use the only methods which it understands, and manage them as a despot.

But why assume despotism? The idea that there is an entity called "the State" which possesses, in virtue of its title, uniform characteristics, existing independently of the varying histories, economic environments, constitutional arrangements, legal systems and social psychologies of particular states, and that these characteristics necessarily combine the manners of a Japanese customs official with the morals of a human tiger, is a pure superstition. It is a piece of mysticism pardonable in persons brought up on their knees before some mortal god, but which—if the irreverence may be permitted—is, none the less, a bluff. Half a century ago, when we were informed by philosophers fed on Hegel that the State represented our high selves, it was an optimistic bluff. Today, when we are periodically told that the State is the executive of the capitalist class or—more terrifying still—the product of one of the nastier Freudian complexes, it is a pessimistic bluff. But it is a bluff in either case.

The State is an important instrument; hence the struggle to control it. But it is an instrument, and nothing more. Fools will use it, when they can, for foolish ends, and criminals for criminal ends. Sensible and decent men will use it for ends which are sensible and decent. We, in England, have repeatedly re-made the State, and are re-making

it now, and shall re-make it again. Why, in heaven's name, should we be afraid of it? The faithful animal—to vary the metaphor—will run our errands; fetch and carry for us; convey us on our journeys; attend our sick-beds; mind our children; show, on the rare occasions that we tell him, a handsome mouthful of sharp teeth, and generally behave like a useful and well-conducted cur. If he does not do his tricks nicely, we are quite capable of beating our own dog ourselves, as—to do him justice—he is well aware. It is really too much to expect us, at this time of day, to relapse into hysterics because some nervous professor has decided, on grounds of high theory, that the harmless and obedient creature, whom we have cursed, kicked and fondled all our lives, is in reality, not a dog at all, but a ferocious species of Siberian wolf.

The truth is that these paroxysms of alarm at the menace to individual freedom involved in every fresh extension of the activities of public bodies are the product of an authoritarian nightmare which, in countries so unfortunate as not yet to have taught their rulers that they are servants, not masters, has only too much justification, but which a mature democracy should have outgrown. Civil liberty depends on freedom of worship; freedom of speech and writing; freedom of meeting; freedom in the choice of occupations; and freedom to combine. Political liberty depends partly on civil liberty, partly on the existence of constitutional arrangements for the maintenance of representative and responsible Government. The sole security for the preservation of either is a public opinion which is determined to preserve them. There is no reason whatever for regarding that security as likely to be weakened merely because steps are taken, as they have been in Great Britain, to extend to the whole population opportunities of well-being previously restricted to a minority; or because certain industries, formerly conducted for the profit of shareholders, are owned and administered by public authorities; or as the result of a decision by a Cabinet responsible to a popularly elected chamber that the national interest will best be served by treating some requirements, rather than others, as possessing the first claim on national resources.

The nostalgic self-deception which, here and there, looks back on the days before the deluge, with their exclusive felicities and securely-guarded comforts, as a golden age of freedom, is not a matter for surprise. It is improbable that the majority of British wage-earners, who recall an unemployment rate averaging, from 1921 to 1938, approximately one-seventh of all insured workers, view the blessings of that happy period in quite the same light. Not by impairing traditional liberties, but by resolution in using them, they have taken . . . the first

steps towards the attainment of objectives long proclaimed and long resisted. They regard, it may be suspected, full employment, expanded social services, and the transference of foundation industries to public ownership, less as a curtailment of freedom than as an enlargement of it. . . .

Who Owns the State?

The foundation of Socialism is, in my view, a decision that certain types of life and society are fit for human beings and others not. I do not believe that any alchemy exists by which historical facts and tendencies can either be made a substitute for such judgments of value or directly converted into them. I do not share Marx's mid-Victorian conviction of the inevitability of progress; nor do I regard social development as an automatically ascending spiral with Socialism as its climax. On the contrary, I think that, in the absence of sustained and strenuous efforts, the way is as likely to lead down hill as up, and that Socialism, if achieved, will be the creation, not of any mystical historical necessities, but of the energy of human minds and wills. The chicanery, discreetly termed relativism, which dismisses ordinary human virtues, from honesty to mercy, as bourgeois morality; falsifies ethical standards; and applauds as triumphs of proletarian heroism on one side of a frontier episodes denounced by it as Fascist atrocities on the other, appears to me nauseous. I regard it, not as the example of up-to-date realism boasted by its votaries, but as a long-familiar poison.

It must be recognized, finally, that there are nations with histories so tragic and environmental difficulties so immense that some form of authoritarian régime may well be the best of which for the time being they are capable. We have committed too many crimes ourselves to be critical of our neighbours; and, provided that such states are willing to live and let live, British Socialists should wish them such success as political systems of the kind allow. But the pretense that the resulting police collectivisms are a shining example for Western Socialists to follow, when not mere cynical bluff, is either ignorance or a credulity so extreme as to require, not argument, but a doctor. The view that Socialism consists in socializing everything except political authority, on which all else depends, is puerile. The question for Socialists is not merely whether the state owns and controls the means of production. It is also, and even more important, who owns and controls the state. Democracy, in one form or another, is, in short, not merely one of several alternative methods of establishing a Socialist commonwealth. It is an essential condition of such a commonwealth's existence. . . .

The Problem of Nationalized Industry

The statement often made by our opponents that the sole distinctive feature of Socialist policy is nationalization is ludicrously beside the mark. In reality, the Socialist arsenal contains a diversity of different weapons, among which nationalization has an important place. The essential point, however, is that full and effective use should be made of all.

Applied in suitable circumstances, nationalization possesses genuine virtues. The mere transference of property-rights involved in it is not by itself tidings of great joy. It is important less for what it does than for what it makes it possible to do. It provides a clear space, free from the obstructive jungle of private interests, on which to build. It facilitates, therefore, the substitution of an intelligent staffwork at the top and co-operative labour throughout, for a competitive scramble or monopolistic restrictionism. The unification on a national basis hitherto adopted may, in some or many cases, be the right design. Against its advantages, however, must be set certain drawbacks. The danger of top-heavy bureaucracy and remote control is, in my opinion, genuine. Effective supervision of these Leviathans by public and parliament has hardly yet been established. Though directors in nationalized industries do not swindle workers, the gulf between the brass-hats and the industrial PBI still too often remains profound.

Socialism ought to mean something vital and inspiring in the lives of the great majority of workers. The social and full employment policies of the Labour Government did, I think, come home to them. I doubt whether its industrial policy, which to most of them was a spectacle, rather than a personal experience, did. Since the number of industries ready for prompt nationalization is limited, I question whether, unless enlarged, it can.

I am in favour, therefore, of extending, with the necessary improvements, public ownership and management by national boards and corporations, as and when practicable. But I think that that particular arrangement should be regarded, not as the one essential element in Socialist policy, pending the application of which nothing valuable can be done, but merely as one species of a large genus of expedients for bringing economic enterprise under social control, and that, instead of ignoring other members of the family, we should labor to stimulate their growth. There are some undertakings which it may not at present be possible to nationalize outright, but which nevertheless it is important to harness to public ends. It is a question whether, in the case of public companies, the government should not be given the right to ap-

point a proportion of the directors. In many, perhaps in most, cases, it might not deem it necessary to exercise that right, but on some it would, and the knowledge that such a power of inside control existed would be a salutary influence on all.

Since the war public money has been used to build in the Development Areas factories to be leased to private firms. There does not seem to be any reason why similar facilities should not deliberately be extended to groups of undertakings organized on socialist and co-operative lines. Local authorities are buyers on a great scale of furniture, building requisites, stationery, catering equipment and so on. As the Socialist hold on local government strengthens, the obvious course for such authorities would seem to be the establishment by joint action between them of productive works for self-supply. The infinite diversities of the building industry—a few large firms of national importance with a multitude of minor local units—may preclude conventional patterns of public ownership; but to combine the nationalization of the former with some form of co-operative organization of the latter ought not to be beyond the wit of man. It is needless, however, to multiply examples, of which many better ones, doubtless, could be found. The point is that, without neglecting new departures in nationalization, we ought to think, not in terms of a single bottle-neck through which Socialist re-organization must be forced, but of a multitude of growing points, at each of which a Socialist government can bring its influence to bear. . . .

Dignity and Honor

A formula sometimes hailed by Socialists as the watch-word of a new order is Equality of Opportunity; but the phrase may express either of two distinct—and sometimes, though not always, antithetic—ideals. The opportunities which it is desired to equalize may be opportunities to rise; to get on; to exchange one position for a succession of others; to climb, in the conventional metaphor, the educational or economic ladder. Or they may be opportunities to lead a good life, in all senses of the term, whether one “rises” or not. The emphasis of the former interpretation of the phrase is on mobility. Its aim is the establishment of conditions which offer the maximum scope for individual self-advancement. The emphasis of the latter is on solidarity. The society sought by it is one in which, while individuals are free to follow the bent of their talents or tastes, the impulse to seek a new position is not sharpened by exasperation at unnecessary disabilities attaching to that already held, and in which the majority of men are happy to continue in familiar surroundings, because they enjoy in them, not only

the economic security, but the dignity, the social contacts, and, if they please, the intellectual interests and culture, which human nature demands. The sentiment of the father who hopes—too often, as things are, with reason—that his son will follow any trade but his own illustrates the first view. The attitude of the worker who refuses a foreman's job because it would divide him from his mates illustrates the second.

Individuals deprived of the chance to use their powers as they please suffer from frustration. Further, society cannot afford more than a certain proportion of fools in high places, which in England is already—to speak with moderation—sufficiently large, and must draw, if its directive work is to be efficiently done, on a broad stream of talent from below. For both reasons arrangements facilitating vertical mobility are important. It is equally or more essential, however, that the mass of mankind, who, for obvious statistical reasons, cannot perform athletic feats in scaling social heights, should enjoy a high standard of civilization. Nothing could be more remote from socialist ideals than the competitive scramble of a society which pays lip-service to equality, but too often means by it merely equal opportunities of becoming unequal. Our aim should be the opposite. It should be to effect a complete divorce between differences of pecuniary income and differences in respect of health, security, amenity of environment, culture, social status and esteem. Might it not, indeed, be beneficial, not only to destroy the connection between them existing today, but to reverse it, so as to make it contemptible to be rich and honourable to be poor? On that state of super-blessedness, however, I must not now dwell. . . .

Ignazio Silone

PROSPERITY—AND THEN WHAT?

For our Tenth Anniversary Issue, the distinguished Italian writer, Ignazio Silone, has sent us a few pages from a lengthy essay upon which he is at present working.—Ed.

It may seem strange to some people that a writer who is chiefly known for stories set in depressed or backward regions should now turn to the problems of prosperity. It may well be asked: is this perchance due to the fact that for some time now these problems have become fashionable? Nonsense. First of all, with regard to myself, I can say that I have never liked those judgments of my literary work which were limited by some sociological or party concept. The only thing which really interests me is the condition of man caught in the gear-wheels of the present-day world. And, naturally, I take my stand on the side of man and not the gear-wheels. If my characters are most often poor peasants, disquieted intellectuals and priests, bureaucrats of opposing apparatuses who move against an arid landscape, this does not occur because of my predilection for a certain local color. It is simply the reality which I know best, I bear it, so to speak, inside of me, and in it the human condition manifests itself in a starker, almost naked form.

On the other hand, are not poverty and wealth correlative terms? They are in fact like heat and cold, and it is impossible to have a clear idea of one except as it stands in relation to the other. I can, however, add some more personal details on my far from recent interest in the problems of prosperity, since this may help to clarify my point of view and its gradual formation amidst the conflicting diatribes of the specialists.

Although I was born and grew up in a region which if rather poor was not backward but on the contrary overburdened, even wearied and exhausted by a surplus of ancient and medieval history, my first reflections on and experience of the situation of man in a rich and technically advanced country go back to the very beginning of my life as a

writer and proceed hand in hand with it. I am speaking of the time when I began to write *Fontamara*, about 1930, at the start of my long exile in Switzerland, indeed, in the German-speaking cantons.

It would be hard to imagine a more flagrant contrast than that between the theme of my first novel (the poverty, exploitation and rebellion, or rather the first awakening of consciousness, of peasants in a Southern Italian village) and the social conditions of the region in which I had found refuge: a region, as everyone knows, which is among the most advanced in Europe, and where poverty, if not totally abolished, has long become a matter of exceptional instances.

The sense of that contrast was sharpened for me by my social contacts with some Swiss friends, with whom I enjoyed discussing the opposed situations in our two countries. They belonged to different social classes (architects, doctors, Protestant ministers, artisans) and also espoused different ideologies; but they had in common a number of typically Swiss characteristics which ordinarily escape foreign tourists, above all, a dislike for rhetoric and loose talk in general, which are so dear to us Latins. With some of them, especially, I shared a sense of mourning for "the God who had failed," that is, the disappointment of the hopes for freedom placed in the Russian revolution; with others, despite our different religious backgrounds, a rather unconventional way of applying Christian ethics to the events of the day and the mores of the ruling class, to states and churches. It should also be said that the feeling of solidarity with the exiles was, for these Swiss, a consequence of their natural aversion to dictatorial governments; but this did not at all attenuate the frankness with which they criticized the defects of their own fellow-citizens and their own institutions.

So while I, goaded by nostalgia and political passion, which I could not express in any other manner, found myself at grips with that story about poor Southern Italian peasants and was trying to narrate the vicissitudes of the often tragic, sometimes grotesque clash between their still semi-feudal mentality and the new forms of exploitations and tyranny, I kept hearing from my Swiss friends no less merciless criticisms of the spiritual decadence of their country. Alluding in particular to the Swiss in the richer cantons, my friends would berate their vulgar hedonism, their mental obtuseness, their technological infatuation and the boredom it inevitably entailed. In support of their Jeremiads, they cited the most recent statistics on the increase in divorce, suicide, deafness, the growing vogue of psychoanalysis in all social classes and the mediocrity of artistic and literary production, despite a generous patronage both public and private. This criticism did not spare the working-class move-

ment, especially the co-operatives and the trade unions in the most important branches of industry, against which the charge was brought of following a completely clannish policy of the defense of high salaries and indifference to problems of general import. Therefore in our discussions it was impossible to avoid the question as to whether the decadence or spiritual stagnation of which my friends complained should not really be considered the result of the growing collective prosperity. And was it legitimate to predict that this would be the fate of any other country which might achieve prosperity?

This was not, nor could it be, even for me, an abstract or negligible problem. Certainly this problem did not prevent me from pursuing my duty as an exiled and therefore free Italian writer. Problems must be faced as they arise, I repeated to myself, and it will be quite a long time before the *cafoni* of Fontamara would have to contend with the drawbacks and difficulties of opulence. But I could not expect from action more than it can give. And how could I delude myself? For each revolutionary action unfolds in relation to a perspective. So, in my subsequent novels, after *Fontamara*, the problems of the future began to cast their gray shadows on the narrative present. Some character would ask: when we will no longer be persecuted, will we in our turn become persecutors? And if we will be able to eat every day so as to wholly satisfy our appetites, will nothing else remain for us but to digest? The insidious problem of the relationship between collective prosperity and moral life remained with me, like a flea in my ear. It was only one aspect of my reflections on the reconstructive capacities of Marxism and the varying experiences with it which were being had in Russia and the Scandinavian countries. It had already been established that, in this Janus of Socialism, the cruel and enraged face shown in the East was frankly repulsive; but how should we interpret the benevolent and optimistic smile on the other face? Was it not a bit too smug, too satisfied with itself? The urgency of making a strict distinction between what should be regarded as essential to Socialism and what was only a contingent accessory, was forced on us by the horrible aping of some of its aspects on the part of Fascism and Nazism (for example, their organizations for the entertainment of workers during their free time).

An attempt to define the new situation had already been made a few years before by the Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset in his book, already then a classic, *The Revolt of the Masses*. But what rendered his interpretation unacceptable to many of us was the obvious fear, mingled with aristocratic contempt, which filled him when confronted by the popular masses' participation in public life. It was not so much

the mass-man that Ortega denounced—about whom in fact he knew very little—as it was the uncultivated man, “the mediocre spirit who knows he is mediocre and has the audacity to proclaim the rights of the mediocre and to impose them whenever he wishes.” Furthermore, the new phenomenon which had to be studied was not the so-called “mass,” a reality and concept in all ages, but rather the fact of “massification,” and one could no longer study it from outside since all of social life was saturated by it, and we ourselves were inside of it. The same hatred of novelty, though based on a more radical historical vision, was expressed by the Italian Guglielmo Ferrero, who also lived in Switzerland at that time, an isolated and haughty political exile, almost an exile among the exiles. To Ferrero undoubtedly goes the credit of having criticized modern mass civilization as early as the first decade of this century, during an era of general optimism. Fundamental to his conception was the distinction between a qualitative civilization and a quantitative civilization. In his book, *Between the Two Worlds*, which appeared in 1913, that idea had been expounded through the conversations among some passengers on a luxury liner, who were returning from America to Europe. They were in fact discussing the future of industrial civilization, of which America was the model for the rest of the world, and in this civilization they discovered the elements of a dangerous instability. America was, in Ferrero’s judgment, a quantitative civilization, due to the fact that its dynamism was based on the uncontrolled and uncontrollable development of productive techniques. In spite of the greater prosperity put within the reach of the many, it was therefore a civilization without stable values and without inner checks, and thus was preparing its own catastrophe.

What irked us most in Ferrero’s gloomy vision was its blank uniformity and, consequently, the absence in it of a slight crack or flaw that might permit one not merely to affirm a different principle but also to act in accordance with it. In fact, at the point we had reached, many principles we had believed in before this—and first among them the myth of Progress—seemed to us to have gone up in smoke and without any great regret on our part. Yet there survived in us an instinctive repulsion to any idea which excluded the possibility of fighting back.

Since those days, with the industrialization of new regions and the spread of the expressive means of the so-called mass civilization, the proportions of the conditioning have extended and become much more burdensome. And, keeping pace with it, those which in the past seemed to us the shrill voices of lone Cassandras have been replaced by a vast chorus of professors and students of sociology armed with statistics, and

against these people we can only oppose an act of faith in man. Indeed, it seems to me that this is the major issue confronting us at the present time.

Until a short time ago, the idea that prosperity, indeed wealth and the superfluous, would cease to be the privilege of a few and would be guaranteed, with a minimum of effort, to an increasing number of men through the use of prodigious sources of energy, such as nuclear energy, was still a science fiction dream. Even now, unfortunately, many peoples are far from that goal and live in conditions of poverty and neglect. Yet we know that prosperity for all has entered the sphere of possibility and that already it is part of our historical perspective (together with its opposite, the general catastrophe of a Third World War, in which everyone now refuses to believe). The very leaders of the Communist world, at least those leaders converted to peaceful co-existence, never pass up an opportunity to announce to their peoples the achievement of a general state of prosperity within the next ten years. I do not think that there is anyone who does not sincerely hope for the complete fulfillment of their promises. A decade passes quickly, and real prosperity for those immense populations, so long afflicted by privations of every kind, would be an excellent thing.

And what then? We know that prosperity solves many problems, and that it creates many new ones. This is certain; but what are these problems? This is the real problem.

Translated from the Italian by RAYMOND ROSENTHAL

AMONG OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Herman Singer, former editor of *The Socialist Call*, is a veteran radical journalist. . . . R. H. Tawney, the famous British historian, wrote *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, *The Acquisitive Society*, etc. . . . Henry Pachter, a *DISSENT* editor and one of our most prolific contributors, recently published a study of Castroism and U.S. foreign policy entitled *Collision Course*. . . . Ignazio Silone is the distinguished Italian novelist and socialist, author of *Fontamara*, *Bread and Wine*, and many other books. . . . Nicola Chiaromonte is editor of the Italian review *Tempo Presente* and a well-known social and literary critic. . . . Lionel Abel, playwright and critic, recently published *Metatheatre* (to be reviewed in our next issue). . . . S. M. Miller is a sociologist who teaches at the University of Syracuse. . . . Leszek Kolakowski is identified at the head of his article. . . . Sidney Lens is a trade union leader and author of many political books.

Henry M. Pachter

THREE ECONOMIC MODELS: CAPITALISM, THE WELFARE STATE, AND SOCIALISM

In the capitalist economy business decisions are made by the owners of resources; the latter may take the form of money, real estate, machinery and equipment, or of claims and rights to use these resources or to dispose of them, or of power positions in organizations. Since labor also is a resource and a commodity, the ability to buy and to sell it comes under this definition of property.

In the Welfare State, these powers of free disposal have been curbed. They are regulated and controlled by political organs, and in large areas of economic activity, government has substituted its purposes for those of independent agents. These purposes are determined politically: i.e., they may range from establishing a strong defense posture to a concern for the well-being of the majority.

In both systems, income is related to the use an owner makes of his property. Under capitalism, the property itself constitutes a claim on income, to be realized in the market; the welfare state, however, supplements the market by other institutions to create or distribute income. Moreover, the Welfare State creates a demand for goods and services which results not from consumer preferences and producer expectations, but from its own political purpose.

Socialism I shall call an economic system which has divorced income from property, and even from the exertion of labor. In contrast to State Capitalism, which still recognizes the property of the state as a claim to income, socialism also divorces capital from production decisions.

Obviously, I am dealing here with "pure types," disregarding intermediate systems such as monopoly capitalism, syndicalism, corporativism, market socialism, which have in common this basic feature: that the means of production are not owned by individuals but by collective bodies which, however, deal with the property claims as though they were individuals. An especially interesting case is the Cartel Gen-

eral or State Capitalism, already mentioned, where this feature has been carried to the extreme: all facilities are owned by one big corporation but the production relations are still governed by the market mechanism.

My purpose is to show what other assumptions must be made to realize each of these models as a working economic system; how each affects the allocation of resources and the general efficiency of production, and above all, the welfare of its citizens.

However, I deliberately refrain from speculating on possible differences of cultural attitudes or changes of human nature in the three systems. I only assume that humans have a natural aversion to involuntary toil and a natural ambition to excel in self-assigned tasks, but that the degree of their acquisitiveness and co-operativeness is related to the environmental conditions which encourage or stifle their development.

I

Capitalist theory claims that all resources find their most useful employment if each owner tries to maximize his profit in a free market, where labor also finds its price.* Fortunately such a pure capitalism has never existed, or else no one would have organized a police, provided courts of justice, built bridges, laid sewers, embellished the public parks, founded hospitals or established universities. It has always seemed to me that the fire brigade refutes the pure theory of free enterprise. What more essential service could one imagine? It ought to command a price and attract the venture capital of an enterprising speculator who wishes to make a profit and therefore allocates resources for this purpose. Yet, nothing of the kind has ever happened; instead of waiting for the free play of the market to prove the usefulness and determine the price of a fire brigade, a committee of the ruling classes on the municipal level went ahead and organized one.

Likewise, the business community felt that private coining privileges led to public losses, and it gave central banks the power to regulate the flow of money, the rate of interest, the value of the currency, and thereby also the direction of foreign trade, the income distribu-

*I do not wish to enter here into a learned discussion of marginal utility and the subjective theory of value. For a detailed analysis see Ben B. Seligman's truly encyclopedic and scholarly work, *Main Currents in Modern Economics* (New York; Free Press of Glencoe, 1963). For theoretical background, I have drawn heavily on this monumental publication, the most complete and the most modern of its kind I know. I am also indebted to Abba P. Lerner, *The Economics of Control*, (New York; Macmillan, 1944,) and Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, (New York; Harper, 1942).

tion between various countries and, to some extent at least, the business cycle. Even at its classical freest capitalism is not an entirely "free" economy. To function properly, it polices itself. In public debate, however, the question of controls usually is confused with the question of who should do the controlling. Business prefers the so-called indirect (orthodox or classical) controls: regulation of the rate of interest, reserve requirements, the marketing of Treasury bills—not because they are indirect or because they are not controls but because the controllers of these controls are businessmen.

On the other hand, business expects the state to protect it against foreign competition and, far from leaving the optimum allocation of mineral resources to the competitive spirit of rapacious speculators, it asks the government to enforce conservation practices, to protect patents and finance research. Even the most ardent theorists of economic liberalism—Professors Mises, Hayek, Roepke—point out that it can function only if a "strong state" enforces the laws of the free market and provides the services which free enterprise does not find profitable. In short, it simply is not true that the free market all by itself results in the optimum allocation of resources.

But quite apart from such empirical observations which undercut the ideal model of pure capitalism (and we have not spoken yet of the tendency toward concentration and monopoly, of the creation of artificial markets through advertising, of manipulation through government orders or policy, etc.), at least two theoretical grounds militate against the contention of the market theorists. Both are inherent in the model and both have been freely admitted by the better representatives of liberal economics. One is the inequality of incomes and the other is the time limit within which a speculator must expect the return of his capital. It is generally conceded that both are incompatible with the optimum use of resources. I shall explain this problem in greater detail because its analysis does not apply to capitalism alone but also to the two other models, the welfare state and socialism.

Apologists of capitalism often say that a free market permits the consumers to "vote" for the goods which they desire, and that the price mechanism tells producers which goods might give greatest satisfaction to the greatest number. Hence, free enterprise equals democracy, Q.E.D. This analogy limps. The consumers must first buy their "ballots": unless they are equipped with purchasing power, their desires will not become manifest to the producers; or, differently expressed: this "democracy" is based on unequal suffrage. Are those who have no vote incapable of satisfactions? If all votes were equal, the sum total of satis-

factions would be substantially greater and the allocation of resources would be much closer to the optimum. Even from the angle of the development of resources, therefore, pure capitalism does not produce the best distribution of efforts. Quite apart from the haphazard method by which the market discovers what is in demand, it does not determine the common good but—at best—the maximum profit for all enterprises.

Paradoxically, this also is the aim of certain types of socialist economy, i.e., the syndicalism practiced in Yugoslavia and preached by Poland's Oscar Lange and his German disciples.* In the way these systems function, they hardly differ from capitalism, except that the dividend is shared between the workers and the government, instead of being paid out to the shareholders to be taxed later. The Yugoslavs who first practiced it, claim for market socialism two virtues: it establishes that "consumer democracy" which capitalism cannot realize, and the producers' associations tend to acquire the power of true soviets, the best form of political democracy. Some day both claims might be validated, provided the Communist party dictatorship disappears; but today Tito's works councils are far from being soviets, and the consumers can express their preferences only months or years after the central planning board has expressed its views through investment priorities.

In the capitalistic economy, this decision is guided by the profit expectations of investors. But Mises correctly states that profit can be obtained only by meeting "a comparatively urgent demand." If there is no such demand equipped with purchasing power, it may be created artificially, through advertising or by inducing the government to finance it; that way, resources are misappropriated to suit a pressure group. Or—a need may exist, but demand may not become effective and supply may not come forth because the projects are too big or too speculative: only big corporations, monopolists or governments have the means or the foresight to allocate resources for long-term research and development on a large scale. It takes guts or the assurance that no competitor has the same plan, to construct a bridge, a railway, a power dam at a time when demand is not yet "urgent" and money might be saved by anticipating it long in advance of urgency. If not government initiative, then at least government guarantee of capital and interest is required to bring forth investments in the infrastructure—roads, canals, draining of marshes, harbors and rivers—which rarely yield profits in the foreseeable future. A paper mill may establish a

* See C. A. Landauer, *European Socialism* (Berkeley 1959, Vol. II.) and B. E. Lipincott, ed. *Economic Theory of Socialism* (Minneapolis, 1938).

hundred-year cycle of timber exploitation; but this exception proves the rule, for the mill expects to make a profit on the real estate in any event. Even this kind of incidental profit did not prevent the railroads from going broke, and the U.S. would not have its marvelous rail network, had not some speculators—miscalculated! One too often forgets that our industrial empire rose over the bodies of expropriated capitalists and failed investors.

Because of this time factor, classical capitalism does not achieve optimum use of resources. Normally, wherever profit expectations have to be deferred beyond the planners' lifetime, the investment will be undertaken only for a reason of public policy, be it conservation, development, autarchy or strategy. The history of foreign aid shows that private capital will not take the risk of developing the infra-structure in the time interval which is consistent with the rapid population increase and the rising expectations of the laggard countries. If rapid development is desired, colonialists, monopolies or state capitalism seem to be the only alternatives.

II

After a glorious career of continued primitive accumulation, during which capitalism did start, spread, and develop modern industrial production all over the world, it now has reached limitations which can be overcome only by more effective methods of organization—the big trust, the monopoly, the government enterprise, state capitalism. The enterprise has become too big, the time span for the return of profits too long and, on the other hand, the need for political investments too pressing for the free market to remain competitive. If it ever did, it no longer responds to consumer needs in distributing the resources and does not make the most effective use of all factors at the right time. It still is serviceable on the smaller scale of consumer industries or even pioneering in some areas of invention; but big research and big industry now are in the era of imperfect competition, and the claims which continue to be made on behalf of “pure” capitalism are based on a theory which no longer fits the facts. Even Mises admits that under monopoly rule “private profit and social productivity are at variance,” hence “however great an evil socialism might be, it would be less harmful than private monopoly.”*

To make my point clear: what has been said so far does not amount to the old socialist charge that monopolies suppress technological progress. The few instances where a significant invention was temporarily

* “Socialism” London 1924, p. 364 ff. Schumpeter, however, holds that monopoly is more efficient, *op. cit.* p. 100.

withheld from exploitation are far outnumbered by the inventions which originated in a monopolistic enterprise and could be exploited only by monopolistic practices. On the other hand, a socialist or state capitalist system might find it just as necessary to delay exploitation of a new invention which makes a recent huge investment obsolete. Imagine a new gimmick which would force all of us to buy a new television set: private industry would ruthlessly force the expense down our throat, while government-operated stations might mercifully continue to use the old system. The government also refuses to build all the bomber types the military-industrial complex is trying to sell it.

The point, rather, is that at a certain level of development the equations of exchange become more rigid, the number of independent variables increases, and the number of indeterminate variables decreases. Moreover, the population explosion and government-sponsored research cannot be captured in any system of equilibristic calculations; finally, neither the external nor the internal reserves adjust themselves to the requirements of the equilibrium. Capitalism no longer can incorporate pre-capitalistic spaces, and the labor force does not obligingly contract as automation makes it obsolete. On the other hand, even the unemployable now refuse to abandon a standard of living which in the most advanced countries has become synonymous with existence. As Marx pointed out, the human factor does not fit into the equations. Hence we must turn the problem around. State capitalism and socialism provide different answers to the question of how to fit the equations for the human situation. We therefore have to say a brief word on the importance of the equations, or what Abba Lerner calls "The Rule."*

We said that technological progress now is speeding ahead much faster than old equipment can be written off, while production units are increasing in size and, in the more developed countries, demand is becoming inelastic. Is greater efficiency the answer? In introducing new production methods, capitalism needs to consider only their cost to the enterprise. It will not consider the social cost of firing people—neither the "disutility" of their enforced leisure, nor the money it costs to maintain them in social insecurity, the social losses in crime, disease and illiteracy, etc. The welfare state makes a conscious effort to assume these social costs, or it may even waste more money to fight

* The Rule of marginal utility says that output should be carried to the point where the cost of the last unit matches the price it fetches, or where the marginal social benefit matches the marginal social cost. Since the latter is also measured in prices, the two equations are identical. The assumption here is that "social benefit" and real social cost can be so measured; this I am going to deny.

those undesirable by-products of capitalistic cost-accounting; but it will not effectively force the enterprise to take them into account (it cannot even control smoke and water pollution, preserve scenic views and wildlife, etc.). A state capitalistic system has the means to deal with the problem of social cost; it may maintain a railway stop which no longer pays, in order to save the gasoline which the commuters might have to use otherwise. Yet more often, it will leave human beings to fend for themselves. Wherever it is operating today, it tends to suppress the problem rather than to solve it. Only a socialist system, operating under conditions of abundance, can make its investment decisions in full view of all economic, social, and human factors that might be affected. It even may make uneconomic investments which might not save labor and minimize cost, but would spare exertion and misery. But we are anticipating: any economic system that wishes to balance cost and revenue must earn its investments before it introduces new inventions, or the new production methods must produce savings in excess of the capital they make obsolete. That, anyway, is the iron Rule for all systems which aim to produce economically, i.e., which fulfill the exchange equations. A free market economy does so by trial and error, through wasteful competition, and at the cost of misallocated resources. It achieves a dynamic equilibrium at the cost of periodic depressions and, even at its best, through violent fluctuations which can be contained only through monopolistic practices, i.e., by destroying the free market.

III

State capitalism—which Rudolf Hilferding called the Cartel General—fulfills the equations by systematizing the monopolistic practices. It avoids the waste of the free market, and it does not permit investments to be misplaced in the stage of development or to become obsolete in the stage of saturation. It can direct investments into ventures which create new demand—Keynes's "pyramids," Tugan-Baranovsky's tower of equipment, a huge defense establishment, or a "new frontier"—and it may even balance inefficient production units against over-productive units. Not for long, though: in the end, state capitalism, too, must balance its budget as well as its other accounts; it must instruct its managers to produce a profit and not to forget that they must earn interest and amortization charges on the equipment which has been placed at each one's disposal. For state capitalism, like private capitalism, is governed by the Rule, and its current production is weighed down by a heavy burden of past investments, some of which no longer may have physical counterparts. (The built-in debt charges

in most government budgets are constantly increasing, and the French are still paying for conquests which they have since lost.)

In contrast to private capital, state capitalism must be more prudent in using the resources which already have been developed and can be more daring in developing resources still unexploited. Since both, however, are laboring under the regime of scarcity, commodities and services have prices which constitute costs for the producer. The relations between buyer and seller, employer and employee, debtor and creditor are the same under both systems. Whatever their system of equations, it must be capable of simultaneous resolution: service must be paid; capital must be amortized and must bear interest; even though production may be nationalized, property relations still govern all economic calculations. It may seem that some nationalized enterprises do not show a profit because the government is their only customer and it subsidizes them. Taxes and subsidies are hidden in the price system, which the government seems to fix arbitrarily for reasons of national policy. In the Soviet Union, e.g., military hardware is "sold" to the defense establishment at prices below cost. That makes the budget look smaller, but has resulted in such confusion of bookkeeping that the managers are now pressing for an honest price system. Today, Gosplan must keep two different sets of books, one of which shows the real cost of the subsidized articles. These subsidies, however, must be covered by taxes taken from the prosperous enterprises or from the consumers, and if the budget does not balance, inflation threatens to upset all equations. State capitalism, therefore, is striving to increase efficiency and to raise the productivity of labor even more than free capitalism. The whip of hunger has been replaced by the guillotine of control figures: all accounts must resolve themselves, all equations must be fulfilled. While no shareholders expect a dividend, it is as though the managers were merely executing the abstract striving of capital to become remunerative.

Many people confuse socialism with state capitalism, and nationalization with socialization. Oscar Lange is clearly thinking of state capitalism rather than socialism when he writes: "The equations which have to be solved in a socialist economy are exactly the same equations, and they are solved by the same persons, as in a capitalist economy."* He does claim three advantages for his system of socialism:

—a greater equality of incomes, conducive to a greater welfare ef-

* Quoted by Landauer, *op. cit.*—Jaurès was of the same opinion: "collectivism can be regarded as a special case of capitalism" (*ibid.* p. 1606).

fect of production and to greater over-all efficiency in the allocation of resources;

—substitution of social gain for private profit;

—planning, i.e., foresight of needs, avoidance of waste and setting of public goals.

These three improvements are of greatest importance, but they have not yet liberated the economy from the thralldom of value equations. Moreover, they are ambiguous: the “social gain” which is being substituted for private profit does not become available to the consumers or even to the producers. Some profit may be used to build public parks and art galleries; but its bulk must be invested in improvements of the national resources. Lange knows that the workers cannot get “the full proceeds of their labor,” as some primitive socialists have demanded. Socialism, we just learned, must follow the market equations, i.e., it must invest its surplus in the same development which would look inviting to capitalists under the profit incentive. These investments are the “social gain” in Poland today.

Recreation facilities and places of learning, however, do not come out of the equations; their cost must be diverted from the profits by governmental decision. Strangely enough, the Polish government has used a large part of the surplus to rebuild destroyed cities in the quaint old style of yore, instead of improving the standard of living. The point is that under state capitalism, which Lange calls socialism, the apportionment of the surplus value among welfare and other national purposes is a matter of arbitrary decision. The government may allot its profits to industrial development, to the creation of a national image, to military power, to welfare institutions and consumer satisfactions, or to a trip to the moon. The equations neither prescribe nor prevent any particular use, and state capitalism therefore is neutral with respect to socialism; it is not incompatible with a distributive economy, but it also is compatible with systems of remuneration according to deserts or to social rank. Under conditions of great scarcity or extreme stress for the sake of rapid development, state capitalism (national socialism) will reproduce the very worst features of early capitalism (or worse, as it did under Stalin); but under conditions of abundance it may develop features of the welfare state or even of socialism.*

Which path it follows, however, will depend upon the development of democratic institutions, and in this respect state capitalism is

* For this reason I speak of only three basic types of economy. State capitalism and monopoly capitalism are derivative forms.

not quite so indifferent. It tends to favor bureaucratic dictatorships; or, better perhaps, state capitalism and dictatorship mutually enhance each other. Particularly if the dictator communicates to the nation a "sense of urgency" for rapid development schemes, he may destroy the germs of pressure groups and of pluralistic bargaining. State capitalism provides necessary economic conditions which tempt the policy-makers toward national greatness. It is the ideal basis for a military, or defense economy. But statism is not socialism.

The arbitrariness of statist production goals has inspired violent protests from partisans of a free economy, and not without reason have they denounced state capitalism as "the road to serfdom." Unfortunately, though, they gave it the name "socialism," and this has created theoretical confusion. The socialists were actually the first to dissociate themselves from all theories of bureaucratic rule. They have insisted, at all times, that the state apparatus should be an instrument, not a taskmaster. In its decadent phase, bourgeois theory no longer has the ability to distinguish between the conceptions of "state" and of "politics." Socialists do not say that the state should organize production and command consumption. They say that demand has come to be politicized.

IV

To explain this distinction, I have to go back to my introductory remarks. Ultimately, the owners of resources do not make one decision but two. They seek profit with those means only which previously they have decided to allot to gainful employment; but they have decided simultaneously what part of their resources and time they wish to retain for themselves. As owner of real estate I might decide to set some of it aside for hunting; as owner of money I might decide to buy jewels or paintings rather than machinery; as owner of labor power I might decide to make myself a monk, thus withdrawing it from the market and raising the price of labor. According to the strict theory as taught by Mises and Hayek, all resources should be competing in the market place for the highest profit and thereby assure the optimum allotment for the greatest satisfaction of the whole, while assuring each worker only the "marginal" wage which will induce him to serve. But in practice this has never been the case. Each owner is a monopolist who may decide to leave his resources idle, to consume them unproductively, or to use them for gain. Thus, workers decided that idleness gives greater satisfaction than work, and by withdrawing labor power from the market they raised its price. They have even conspired to do that, just as landowners have conspired to control the use of land and as bankers have conspired to maintain the value of the currency. These are dif-

ferent kinds of conspiracy, recognized as legal at different stages in the development of modern industrialism; together with the first kind of intervention we mentioned—the care of governmental bodies for health, welfare, security and communications—they are “countervailing powers” which mitigate the arbitrariness, brutality, uncertainty and insecurity of the capitalistic market.

The welfare state is a capitalistic economy which largely depends on the free market but in which the countervailing powers have been politicized and are consciously employed to balance the economy, to develop the national resources or to pursue fixed goals of social policy. Foremost among these goals are economic security, the raising of living standards for the poor, conservation and development of resources. The fully developed welfare state has at its disposal a wide range of economic instruments, classical as well as Keynesian and statist. They include the government's power to regulate, to control, to intervene, to tax and to redistribute the product, to plan and to use its position as a buyer of 10–20% of the national product. The welfare state may achieve techniques of industry-wide planning, price-fixing and over-all control of development, but though it will nationalize the coal industry in France and England, erect a TVA in the United States and build a government steel mill for India, it stops short of expropriation. On the contrary, its proclaimed aim is to preserve the structure of property and to protect the formation of a free market. Whatever expropriating is to be done must come through the free play of the market, as is being done, e.g., in our farm economy despite price supports. The basic relationships of buyer and seller, employer and employee, owner and non-owner are no different from those prevailing under pure capitalism, but they are supplemented by state interference in two important areas: where classical capitalism is indifferent to the distribution of income, the welfare state at least tries to make income differentials less steep; also, whereas under pure capitalism the development of resources is but an accidental by-product of the profit incentive, the welfare state sets itself definite goals of developing public and private facilities, consumer satisfactions, even tastes and standards.

In contrast to pure, classical capitalism, which is totally producer-oriented, the welfare state may plan the deliberate increase of consumer satisfactions, be it in the form of a more equal distribution of income or in the form of raised productivity or in the form of enlarged public services. It does not always do so; it may stop at “full employment” which may be brought about through defense expenditures or pyramid-building without any noticeable increase in the general stand-

ard of living and without making more people equal. However, the welfare state must give its citizens more security than pure capitalism, and its planning usually results in higher wage rates, shorter hours, greater opportunities, or, at the very least, in the maintenance of satisfactions which otherwise might be lost. By virtue of both its means and its aims, the welfare state therefore is often dubbed "socialism on installments" or "creeping socialism."

But we should not be misled by its efforts to plan, regulate and control production, to redistribute income and to curb the uninhibited use of private property. At the hub of its mechanics, it is different from socialism. Though some prices and wages are determined politically, on the whole they are determined by the market, and that is true even of the public enterprises; the regime of property prevails throughout, with the dead weight of past investments burdening the calculation of profit and the decisions on future investments, with at least a theoretical obligation to balance all budgets, and with remuneration still tightly ruled by a man's contribution to the value of the product. Public projects still need to be justified in terms of national policy rather than human needs, and expenditure for defense and similar competitive purposes still exceeds the welfare expenditure.

V

An economy totally controlled by the interests of the ultimate consumers is properly called socialism. We usually distinguish two stages. The ultimate, communism, permits every citizen to draw on the public resources according to his needs. This presupposes a degree of productivity and wealth which probably is not available in any country now, in addition to a development of public morality that may not be achieved in the near future. I therefore confine myself to the penultimate stage, socialism, where distributions may still be proportionate to deserts. Even at this stage, however, a *national dividend* may be distributed among all citizens in two forms: increased public services or the conversion of many essential services (such as higher education, health, theatre) from private to public operation;* secondly, the distribution of a minimum allowance sufficient to cover the expense of feeding, housing and clothing a family.† The minimum allowance

* In the Soviet Union, these public consumer services now amount to 15% of wage income, and are supposed to rise to 50%.

† Anton Menger formulated as one of three basic rights "that each member of society may claim that the goods and services necessary to the maintenance of his existence shall be assigned to him, in keeping with the measure of existing means, before the less urgent needs of others are satisfied." (*Das Recht auf den vollen Arbeitsertrag*, Stuttgart, 1910.) The other two are Louis Blanc's "right to work"

would not be generous enough to cover luxury expenses and hence there remains an incentive to earn additional wages to keep up with the Joneses. Wage levels may be governed by demand and supply, through collective bargaining, and there will be wage differentials according to skill. A free market will provide goods and services, allowing demand and supply to regulate those prices which are not manipulated for purposes of public policy. Both public enterprise and free entrepreneurs or cooperatives may compete for the consumers' favor.

Some prices may be administered to implement public policy. It is easy to imagine, e.g., that each citizen is allotted a room of ten by ten feet; but if a man's need exceeds the standard house in his community, he may have to pay progressively increasing rent per additional square foot, window or door. For all these transactions, money will be used as a means of circulation and for purposes of accounting. I can see no reason why a socialist economy should deprive itself of this useful invention—provided the money is not used to form capital and to acquire the control of production facilities.

Capital formation may be prevented by a number of devices, such as steep income and inheritance taxes. This may be important for the period of transition if expropriated owners are to be indemnified. One may also think of Sylvio Gesell money, or a tax on all means of circulation and credit accounts such that money would lose a certain percentage of its value every month. That percentage might even be regulated for purposes of public policy in the same way as we now raise and lower reserve requirements or the rate of interest. The device is not primarily intended to reduce big bank books and it does not even serve that purpose very effectively; its main purpose is to help in divorcing present from past production, a necessity which I shall discuss presently. Here I only wish to insert a remark on private property.

It seems to me that socialists have overestimated the importance of expropriating the expropriators; the symbolic value of this measure far exceeds its economic significance. What matters is not ownership but control. A man like Mattei had a stranglehold not only on the whole Italian economy but on Italian foreign policy, too, though he did not own a single drop of the oil on which he had built his power. Or closer to home: if one has to have a dictator, one might think of better men than Robert Moses; but if any man were to claim as much power merely on the ground that he owns a lot of the State's real es-

and Ferdinand Lassalle's right to a just share of (not the full!) product of one's labor. These "rights" fall short of abolishing inequality and exploitation, but their realization is a condition for a classless society.

tate, he might be harassed by D.A.s in every borough and hounded by tax inspectors in every district. Owners may be parasites, but economically speaking they are mere *faux frais*, or overhead. Their unearned income is not a personal tithe which they exact from the community but a payment for the use of capital. In the capitalist lore, it is indeed the tribute to capital, not to its owner.

VI

A socialist economy does not earn "wages of capital"; in fact it severs the umbilical cord between capital formation and production, or in Marxian language, between past labor and current employment. This may sound utopian, and some readers who so far may have gone along, figuring that the national dividend also is nothing but an extension of welfare state services, may accuse me of economic diletantism. Indeed, every major economist who has given the matter some thought, has emphasized the need for a socialist economy to heed the equations, to follow the Rule, to amortize capital and, if it wishes to invite expansion, to pay itself interest and even ground rent. Schumpeter said that any other notion is "irrational," Abba Lerner worked out schemata showing how the ultimate costs must equal prices, and Mises thought that he had refuted the viability of socialism by showing that under that system "calculation would be impossible." Only Kautsky had an inkling of the importance of "freeing prices from values," but he failed to follow up his idea, and it was an outsider, Peter F. Drucker, who laid his finger on the crucial point:

The wage rate is the symbol of conflict rather than the issue itself. The basic problem is a conflict between the enterpriser's view of wage as cost, and the employee's view of wage as income. The real issue is not an economic one but one over the nature and function of wage. (*The New Society*, New York; Harper, 1950, p. 48.)

Since we already have severed income from cost in section V, we now have a similar conflict between the state enterprise's view of capital as cost and the consumers' view of capital as expenditure. The issue is not how much capital should earn to remain fair in a socialist society, but what its function can be in such an economy.

The difference between a socialist and any other economy is in the divorce of production from capital or property claims. In the socialist economy capital goods, once created, enter into the consumption funds of the society, to be drawn upon as the need occurs. There is no need to amortize it in any given time or to realize a profit on it. We are using facilities, such as roads, which our fathers built, and we

are building facilities, such as airports, which our children may use; strangely enough, such facilities are being paid out of the current municipal, state and federal budgets, but are not carried on the books of these bodies as "assets"; nevertheless, bonds representing the value of these assets are being held and serviced for generations.

Other examples of divorce between real capital value and use challenge the sense of outrage. Daniel M. Friedenberg has shown in *DISSENT* how tax advantages make it profitable for owners to tear down houses which still might be of service for years, while at the same time rat-infested slums are maintained in service because they still yield a profit. All I suggest is that a socialist society might use this same divorce of past investment from present enjoyment, but for a better purpose. We already have seen that state capitalism is capable of taking losses in one industry while earning profits in another. All that was required to satisfy the Rule was that the profit and loss accounts cancel each other out. But we know that in practice the balance is never achieved in any particular year—for indeed: why must the year be the unit? why not the decade? In practice we draw on present resources to unbalance the budget, or else we could have no development. But then, having established the new facilities, we forbid ourselves their enjoyment and say, in effect: now we must tighten our belts and pay for these goodies. Though we may have created the new investment in order to work less, we now must work more to pay for it. If this is not irrational, words have no meaning.

It is, indeed, a fetishistic way of looking at "value" which makes us demand that capital goods must produce value in all types of economies. They do not affect the prices of goods unless someone claims that they "belong" to him and he must get his reward for letting us use them. It is the same fetishistic view, that man creates "values", which makes us demand that all equations must be resolved simultaneously. They don't have to be; in a distributive economy, we don't have to wait until we find a buyer to turn the merchandise over. On the other hand, such an economy may destroy unserviceable assets or abandon created values—don't we do that to our military hardware anyway?—without suffering the kind of loss that our capitalistic economy finds in its books if that happens; for the loss really has occurred when the goods first were erroneously produced.

I shall admit that this kind of economy encounters certain difficulties. It is rather wasteful; it cannot account for all its transactions in one set of books; its measurements of efficiency are uncertain, and a number of indeterminate variables enter into its cost calculations, not

to speak of the numerous political factors which determine its prices. All this is small discomfort, however. A distributive economy is possible only at a fairly advanced stage of development; one cannot distribute poverty, but only wealth. Given this condition and given the enormous possibilities of further increasing productivity, I see no reason why such a society should not make ad hoc decisions whether to use or not to use certain facilities without regard to cost, whether to promote or to retard a certain development without fear of meeting the dividends; indeed, what Mises counts for the refutation of socialism, its indifference to proper cost accounting, I would claim for its virtue.

Nevertheless, no society has unlimited funds, and even the most liberal economist must economize somewhere. The plans must be drawn up with an eye on citizens who might be stingy with their time. Or, certain materials may indeed be scarce, and someone must calculate which of two possible substitutes might be easier to develop. In that case, "easier" means fewer hours of labor, less waste of other materials, cheaper transportation etc. In other words, a socialist economy may keep a second set of books where all transactions are calculated, either in hours of labor or even in prices (provided the price system has not become too much distorted). But this set of books will have to allow for a kind of wastage unheard of in our present economy: time wasted in experimentation, machines bought not to increase efficiency but to make work easier, committee meetings and grievance procedures, special privileges granted to attract workers; on the other hand, the surplus value also will be enormous, as workers demand parks, playgrounds, nurseries and other special distributions. In short, the bookkeepers will be aware that capitalistic enterprise could be much more efficient, and that is the reason why socialist economy must not be managed by the bookkeepers. Indeed, it can survive only as long as it is controlled by organs of democracy on all levels, from the planning boards down to the works council.*

* I have dealt with the philosophical and ethical aspects of socialism in "The Right to Be Lazy," *DISSENT*, Winter, 1956. There I argued that the aim of socialism is not to make production more efficient but to humanize it, and that the so-called "progress" is not the highest of all values.

Nicola Chiaromonte

THE UNREASON OF STATE

When, after hearing about a case of government corruption, police torture, or arbitrary arrest we in Europe call on the state to respect moral values, we forget that the most important privilege modern bureaucratic government guarantees (if not imposes on) its subjects and servants is moral irresponsibility.

Be he soldier, functionary, minister or simple citizen, the individual is absolved of all responsibility and relieved of the task of freely examining public issues so long as he obeys orders from above. The state takes on itself the full burden of committing errors, follies and crimes, transforming them into efficacious or at least "inevitable" acts. If the state did not grant this privilege to its citizens it could not function as the machine it is and is meant to be. Moreover, if the state's commands were subject to the free criticism of individual consciences, the right to disobey would be sanctioned by the constitution. But is it not obvious that no state body would survive the exercise of this right?

The totalitarian state bases itself on the principle of individual irresponsibility carried to the extreme. Indeed, it is not so much a system where, according to the old sally, "everything not prohibited is obligatory" as one which in exchange for its subjects' automatic allegiance the government guarantees them what the basest element in every individual secretly wants: release from the demands of responsibility, inquiry, choice and freedom.

Only the belief in an ideal democratic state, where the deeds of rulers are in harmony with the dictates of men's consciences, kept this principle from overrunning Europe in its full destructive fury. That the democratic ideal has been wholly or largely realized in any country in the world is claiming too much and is really more than one can ask. One has to be satisfied with the fact that there was, and still is, a struggle for such a society, that the principle of totalitarianism has not triumphed everywhere, and that wherever it did take hold it ended by being defeated, as we are beginning to see even in Russia.

Nevertheless, the system of government under which we are now

living in Europe is still founded for the most part on the principle of individual irresponsibility. Mass politics, the organizing, directing and restricting of multitudes within the boundaries of a collective discipline cannot be obtained on any other basis. As Plato argues, only the individual is capable of reasoning, not the mass. So only the individual can be held responsible for what he does; neither the mass, nor the individual submerged in the mass can. Drowned in a multitude of men like himself, subject like them to the coercion of factory and office, plus the search for a modicum of breathing space, the individual can only submit and adjust to the common lot. Solely in personal relationships does his individual responsibility come into play; otherwise his choices are obligatory. If existence is thus reduced to a series of choices that are compulsory, what room is left for the exercise of independent criticism and liberty; what concrete meaning can such ideal aims have?

Does it make sense to ask the state to respect moral values? Guglielmo Ferrero has shown that since the time of Napoleon (who destroyed the principle of legitimacy while restoring the principle of authority, thereby creating the modern bureaucratic state) the state has not recognized any principle superior to its own conservation. And this is not the simple reason of state of absolute monarchy; it goes much farther for, in practice if not in principle, it is claimed to be the supreme expression of Reason on earth. Reason thus conceived means Historical Necessity, which is another way of saying political expediency, and that actually amounts to whatever suits the rulers.

But one should not reduce the problem to the iniquity or wisdom of those who govern. The state that does not recognize any principle superior to itself has not issued from a void. It is the outgrowth of a situation in which no God, no idea of Good, no moral imperative has shown itself to be strong enough to impose its norms. And this kind of state is implicit not only in authoritarian but in democratic ideologies. In the last century up to the collapse of totalitarian regimes, even the Catholic Church, without accepting the concept did accept the fact, and volunteered to serve as the spiritual arm of any government opposing libertarian and egalitarian movements. But, interestingly enough, the chief supporters of this idea of the state were the ever-increasing masses who had been taught by the *Weltgeist* and social conditions to seek profit, power and efficiency without concern for the idealistic fictions in which the ruling classes cloaked their very materialistic operations.

What does it mean to ask the state to respect moral values? When we act as individuals the existence of such values is as evident as the

possibility of choosing between "better" and "worse." In fact, what Husserl says about truth can be applied to morality: in concrete situations the difference between right and wrong (like the difference between true and false) is clear and unequivocal; but if one is bent on equivocation one can of course find as many meanings of right and wrong as there are possible equivocations.

When we think of ourselves as members of a collectivity like the state, in the extreme circumstances of war or revolution (or when our proximity to wielders of power tempts us to influence them), we find again and again that we have to choose between a personal morality which is clear but ineffective and irrelevant, and the official norm of public interest which soon becomes *salus publico suprema lex* even when the situation is far from extreme. Once more we are called on to obey historical necessity which in practice means continually adjusting to *force majeure*, modifying action to meet the demands of expediency and accepting the kind of operation to which politicians decree "there is no alternative." Now the fact is that they simply refuse to see the validity of any choice that does not, in the first place, protect their power; and they take it upon themselves to decide which forces are invincible and which are not, the former being those they fear, the latter those they feel they can control or eliminate.

Historical necessity and its offspring, political expediency, have the special virtue of relieving of responsibility whoever acts in their name or according to their rules. An action ordered by history has the character of implacable and indisputable necessity; failure to perform it, not the violation of common morality in performing it, is considered reprehensible. When one has carried out the act, he is considered to have absolved an ethical obligation and obeyed a moral imperative, or to say it "in prose" he had no choice, because Necessity knows no law, and orders from above cannot be disobeyed. Ordinary morality, then, has either no voice at all in the matter or loses itself in casuistry.

Although Historical Necessity is very different from the Fate of the Greeks it fulfills a similar function. Historical Necessity is fate minus the supernatural. Concocted in government offices and committee meetings it comes out of computer machines sharp and clear; yet this does not keep it from being considered as inevitable as if it had been imprinted in the nature of things from time immemorial. Its greatest value, though, is that it frees its interpreters, executors and instruments from the weight of responsibility to their fellows, their consciences and the God in which they may believe.

All this is clear enough if we consider the acts of judges, soldiers,

and simple functionaries whom no one would think of holding responsible for their decisions and deeds insofar as they obey the law or orders from above; but it becomes even clearer if we look at the crucial acts of statesmen.

One of the most cogent examples is President Truman's order on August 5, 1945 to drop the first atom bomb on Hiroshima.

Whether his decision was moral or immoral, human or inhuman, good or evil is not the question. The concepts of good and evil are irrelevant for the excellent reason that the facts do not permit us to consider Truman responsible for his act in the sense that an ordinary person is so considered when he harms another; or in the sense that Nero is considered responsible for Agrippina's assassination, and Napoleon for the execution of the Duke of Enghien.

The most important problem raised by the atom bomb was not whether the massacre of hundreds of thousands of defenseless human beings would "save" hundreds of thousands of American lives. What was really at issue was the nature of the new arm and the consequences of its utilization. Moreover, some of the scientists who had collaborated on its invention and fabrication were deeply conscious of this and of the fact that the crucial question was at once moral, intellectual and political. In other words it was a complex human issue, not a narrow question for specialists.

But the vital issue with all its complexities was quickly tabled, leaving only the "technical" question which the experts in political realism solved without difficulty. Winning the war as rapidly as possible was the sole aspect of the problem clearly visible to Henry Stimson, President Truman's Secretary of War. For him the atom bomb was no different from any other weapon except that it was more powerful and could therefore end the war in one blow. He advised Truman accordingly, Truman followed his advice, and the generals, of course, were of the same mind. Now in times of war who are the supreme experts if not the generals?

Once they had declared that dropping the bomb would save hundreds of thousands of American lives, and once the state machinery had reduced the issue to a technical one, Truman had no choice but to accept the experts' opinion (which was a simple deduction from the principle of reason of state). Could he absurdly affirm that the lives of hundreds of thousands of American soldiers were worth less than an ethical and political thesis supported by ideas rather than by figures and the guarantee of swift and decisive results? If, however, he had deliberately analyzed all the pros and cons and not been hypnotized by the

criterion of mere efficiency, which narrows the range of vision to the present moment, he would have proved himself a statesman worthy of what he called "the new era in the history of humanity." But the statesman who today looks beyond the present and seeks anything but the swiftest possible success is considered guilty of preferring abstractions to reality, and of falling short of his duties which, as the Machiavellians so aptly say, are those of a realistic technician not of a moralist.

So Truman had no real alternative and cannot be held responsible for the course he took. In that case, we might ask, does the onus for bombing Hiroshima fall on Stimson and the military command? But they, too, could only do what they did, that is, perform their task of bringing the war to a rapid and victorious conclusion.

However the trail does not end there. Not even the scientists who constructed the bomb and who, like Oppenheimer, thought it should be dropped, can be held responsible. They *had* to give the advice they did since, after all, their business in Los Alamos was not the conducting of a laboratory experiment but the creation of a weapon. The simple demonstration of the power of the bomb—which was the alternative to its actual use—could never have been as persuasive as the destruction of an entire city.

Hence scientists like Szilard and Born who had declared their opposition to the use of a live target were left to their moral scruples. Yet their scruples were not only reasonable and well-founded, as the history of atomic arms in the following years proved, they were "realistic." For it soon became apparent that the destruction of Hiroshima was unnecessary for a rapid victory over Japan as the concessions made to Stalin for his cooperation. The Empire of the Rising Sun had been at the end of its tether for a whole year, and an ultimatum plus the threat of atom bombs would have been enough to bring surrender.

At the conclusion of our search for those who bear responsibility for one of the gravest decisions in contemporary history we find ourselves in a vicious circle. Responsibility seems to belong to everybody and to nobody, that is, to the state. Who is the state? If it is the machine that keeps the vicious circle going or Nietzsche's "cold monster," what is the motor of the machine and the soul of the monster? I submit that it is an idea of good and evil that can be adjusted to circumstances, political expediency, the last image of the Godhead for Western man.

The cult of expediency is simply the systematic surrender to accomplished facts. Properly speaking, when Truman gave the order to drop the bomb he did not really decide anything. "To decide" means to in-

tervene in the course of events with an act of free will, whereas Truman just capitulated to the fact of the existence of the atomic weapon, sanctioning what the scientists had created and the warriors prepared.

It is obvious that the vicious circle we have tried to describe can never bring about justice. It has room only for the expedient, the "inevitable" and that which is guaranteed to give rapid results.

To what degree the contemporary state is incapable of rendering justice was revealed in two extreme cases: the Nuremberg trials of the Nazi leaders in 1945 and the Eichmann trial in 1962 in Jerusalem.

Judged by ordinary standards of good and evil the Nazi leaders were certainly criminals. But according to the notion of the state common to them and their judges, it is not at all certain that they could be considered so. Since the individual in obeying the orders of whom-ever he considers his superior is convinced that he is acting for the preservation and the greater glory of the state, and since there is no principle higher than that, he is not supposed to have further moral responsibility.

Now only if the verdicts in Nuremberg and Jerusalem had been pronounced in the name of a different principle (i.e. the right and duty of every individual to disobey authority's orders when they are in conflict with his ordinary sense of good and evil) could they be regarded as just, and not simply justifiable. However, neither at Nuremberg nor in Jerusalem was such a principle proclaimed. Instead of the meeting of justice, there was the avenging of a crime. What prevailed was the principle of retaliation.

No matter how enormous the crime to be contended with, retaliation is not justice. It does not placate a single Erinnys. Justice is what is achieved by Athena in the *Eumenides*, when, with the *agon* of the just judgment, an expedient that is only a symbol of violent action, she breaks the chain of bloody deeds. And such a "just judgment" cannot be attained without an idea of justice, and without a society that wants to be just in accordance with an ideal image of itself and its destiny. Political expediency, awe of accomplished facts and *force majeure* have no place in this image, which is formed by a desire for peace and continuity; and these are ends that cannot be obtained without respecting norms that transcend immediate advantage.

Today in order to transform the mass in which we languish into an orderly and peaceful society we need an entirely fresh political foundation to serve as a bridge between new, freer forms of communal living and the hybrid forms based on repression that were forced on us by a century and a half of political and economic upheaval. On the

whole one could say that modern man has not yet really begun to experience either freedom or responsibility, and without these, decorous living together is impossible.

Perhaps we are being Utopian. However, one thing is certain: the mechanical organization of society that has been crushing the Western world for one hundred and fifty years, and that has now reached a climax, is absolutely bad insofar as it has destroyed the individual's sense of responsibility and convinced him that participation in politics is meaningless.

Are we then calling for the destruction of machines and denying the necessity of an efficient order? Certainly not. What we maintain is that the mechanization of society and politics is absurd, incongruous, and evil; for social and political life simply do not tolerate automatization. Menial work can be mechanized, but not creative activity, and surely not the most creative of all activities, the invention of ways of living with one's self and with others. Indeed when mechanization spreads in all directions it is deadly.

This minority, however, does carry some weight because it is they and not the mass of eager and unhappy servitors who are entrusted with the destiny of society. After all, the tissue of society is formed and nourished by the natural and reasonable accord among free individuals, not by the technical and quasi-military organization that is now the object of universal worship. This kind of organization seems an inevitable necessity but as a matter of fact it is essentially destructive, for it consumes energy without recreating it.

In the final analysis, the vicious circle of irresponsibility that we traced earlier is the result of a fundamental fallacy, the "realistic" tenet that the validity of human actions, enterprises, and even thoughts are measured by what they correspond to "in reality," that is by their immediate effectiveness.

We must challenge this false notion with our conviction that "reality" is not the measure of anything. Indeed, it is but a burden to be borne or a torment to be suffered unless *we* measure *it* by a clear idea of something that could be in the place of what is.

Does that mean opposing the unreality of myth to the reality of the concrete and the calculable? Why not? Myth is an ineradicable part of what men think and do; it is the voice of the unreality that we are made of, that life is made of, and that man continually contrasts to accomplished facts. After all, in Greek *mythos* originally means "natural discourse" and *logos* "orderly discourse." A just measure of each is perhaps the most that man can hope to achieve.

Lionel Abel

ROLF HOCHHUTH'S "THE DEPUTY"

No play as important, as interesting as Rolf Hochhuth's *The Deputy* has been shown for a very long time—and no play as interesting in an important way. I would insist, too, that the importance of the work is due not merely to its subject—as many critics have said—for if the subject were not expressed in the play's action, how would its importance be felt, how could the play hold us? And hold us it does, more and more powerfully until the tremendous climax of the penultimate scene. So I will not accept the disjunction other critics find tolerable, that this is a poor play with a great subject. It is precisely the play which has made people realize its subject is great—something nobody knew until Hochhuth had written *The Deputy*.

To be sure, it was known that the Nazis exterminated six million Jews; but this is only the background of *The Deputy*. What was not known generally, and what is dealt with in the play, is the attitude the Vatican took to the Nazi extermination program. Yes, it was known that Pope Pius XII had done nothing, or very little, in behalf of the Jewish victims; what was not known, and can best be known through seeing Hochhuth's play, is the precise manner in which Pope Pius XII refused to condemn the Nazis or lift his voice in behalf of the victims. It has been said that if there is anything great about Hochhuth's work, it is the stupendousness of the historical event which inspired it. Now this is a poor thing to say about a work like *The Deputy*. And it is a false thing to say too. What is stupendous in the play is its action, which consists in the forming of a truly heroic decision by a young Jesuit priest, a decision finally fixed by the unmasking of the moral emptiness of Pope Pius XII. The heroism of the young priest's decision is, of course, not historically authentic: Father Fontana is an invention of the author. Also, the unmasking of the Pope is not historical; he was never unmasked so dramatically, except in Hochhuth's imagination. Instead of talking about how serious and important the subject of this play is and yet how unskilled and crude the devices of its author, let us note that the unmasking of the man who was supposed to be Christ's

direct representative on earth is an event of the highest interest, and that the author understood this, which shows him to have the instinct of a true dramatist.

Of course the play has faults and the production is not as skillful as it might have been. I can praise only three of the actors: Fred Stewart as the Cardinal, James Brett as the young Jesuit priest, and Emlyn Williams, who is magnificent as the Pope. Then, too, the author can be criticized for not having restricted his play entirely to the struggle behind the scenes among Churchmen. The scenes dealing with the rounding up of Jews and their dispatch to death camps and those in which the Nazi officials express their disgust for the Jews in their power are quite unnecessary and distracting. Moreover, I think Hollywood has presented Nazis better, and in fact there is a certain affinity between typical Nazi methods and typical Hollywood films; the brutality of the Nazis goes very well with the sensationalism of film techniques. But in this play there should not have been a single brute. Nor should there have been a single unwilling victim. The ignominious and debased figures of Jews, the cruel and taunting figures of the Nazi guards and executioners are wholly out of place in a work whose main action is a spiritual one: the decision formed in the soul of the young Jesuit priest, Ricardo Fontana.

But it is one thing to call a play imperfect—most great plays are—and another to call it poor. I submit that I have yet to sit through a modern work, written, say, in the last twenty years, as continuously interesting as *The Deputy*. Moreover, it is interesting without relying on lightness or humor. There are some moments of humor, as a matter of fact, not many, and these I found rather obtrusive and irrelevant. I would have preferred the play to be even more constantly grave than it is, nor would my interest have been diminished thereby. I have heard a director say that no modern audience can sit through a play unless there is humor in it. Having seen *The Deputy*, I know this to be false. Most modern plays do have to have humor for us to sit through them, but this, I think, is because such plays are not about anything really important. What is really serious is truly interesting.

Mr. Howard Taubman, writing in the March 7 Sunday *Times*, claims to have found fault in *The Deputy*: the Pope, Mr. Taubman writes, is not permitted by the playwright to justify himself with the brilliance a playwright such as Shaw, for instance, allowed to his priests in *St. Joan*. This is certainly true, and Hochhuth is no Shaw.

But the effect at which Hochhuth was aiming in his play would not have been served by Shavian methods, even assuming the playwright capable of using them. Shaw aimed at amusing; and it is very amusing to hear an immoral decision justified by brilliant reasoning. But Hochhuth was not interested in making Pope Pius XII amusing. I think he gave the Pope only those arguments the Pope actually used. Certainly, he did not try to improve on them. But if I have any fault to find with his presentation of the Pope and the Pope's arguments for not intervening on behalf of the Jews, it was rather that the playwright did not show the Pope rendered silent, finally unable even to argue against the crushing force of the young Jesuit's moral appeal.

Pope Pius XII is, as I have said, unmasked by the playwright, an act we must regard as great, both morally and as theatre. But is it only Pope Pius XII, the particular individual, Pacelli, who happened to be Pope at the time of the play's action, who is unmasked by the author? Let me restate the argument as given by Pope Pius XII to Father Fontana for not denouncing Hitler and intervening for the Jews. The situation in Eastern Europe was as follows: the Russians, the victory of Stalingrad behind them, were advancing victoriously into the Catholic communities of Eastern Europe, taking over Church properties, and installing Communist bureaucrats in the positions of power once controlled by priests. Against the Russian advance there stood only the armies of Hitler. Was Hitler then the Church's main enemy? Did not the Church have something to gain if his armies held their ground? Was it right in this situation for the Pope to strike at Hitler with a denunciation of his racial policies? Was it not to be hoped, rather, that the war might end with Hitler still in power and with Catholic properties and the Catholic faithful of Eastern Europe still beyond Stalin's reach? Now the argument, simply as a political argument, is not a poor one, and it was one that any Pope would have been bound to take seriously into account. The question in my mind, though, as I heard this argument put by Emlyn Williams with all the persuasiveness he could give it, was whether it would not have been put by any Pope, and not just the Pacelli of Hochhuth's play. Would Pope John, to take Pacelli's extreme opposite, have reasoned differently had he been Pope at the time? No one can say, of course, and anyone has a right to believe he would have thought differently. It is remarked in the play by the Cardinal that there have been "warm" and "cold" Popes, and that since God is the one who determines who will be Pope, then God at that particular juncture of history must have wanted a cold Pope in the Vatican. But was it because Pacelli was "cold" or because

he was the Pope that he acted as he did? This question, raised by the play, is certainly not answered by it.

That the question is raised, however, shows that this is a Protestant play. Who but a Protestant would have made the Pope the chief target of a work dealing with the extermination of the Jews by the mainly Protestant Germans? Moreover, the heroic action of the play is an action of *protest*, a protest against Rome on the part of a priest. And the protest is more ringing and challenging when made to the Pope in person than when carried out in Auschwitz, before the Nazi executioners.

This is a modern play, of course. It is not a nineteenth century play in any sense, and while there is some resemblance in it to certain plays of Schiller, it made me think even more strongly of Corneille. The forming of an heroic decision—was not that Corneille's real subject, was not this the source of the sublimity with which he thrilled the French court? Thinking of Corneille, one can see the immense distance between the seventeenth and the twentieth centuries. Corneille's exalted characters, his kings, his princesses, are not without the spirituality their high positions suggest them to have. Pope Pius XII, in Hochhuth's play, is without the human grandeur required by his office. And Corneille's proud and heroic individuals who set their own moral wills above superior power and station, are further ennobled by the grandeur of their adversaries. Sertorius, in Corneille's play, having turned against Rome, says proudly:

Rome n'est plus dans Rome, elle est toute où je suis.

Hochhuth's priest, having defied the Pope and placed on his cassock the yellow star Jews were forced to wear, seems overwhelmed by his own action, and is unable afterwards to express any powerful conviction of the rightness of what he did. When in the following scene he goes voluntarily to his death with the Jews, he does not tower over his destiny but seems shrunken beneath its weight. One has the painful impression that in modern times institutional power deprives the individual of spirit, while the defiance of such power by the individual shrinks rather than swells his soul.

Thus it was that during the scene when the priest is merely acting out his defiance before the Pope, his conviction seems more real than in the scene in which acting had to become action and his defiance meant pain to his flesh. This, too, is something quite modern, not conceivable in any seventeenth-century work.

Probably we talk too much about art and do not know enough

about it. It is simpler than our aestheticians think. Skill and cleverness are important to art, but not all-important. And a deep seriousness goes a long way toward solving problems too complicated for the unstirred intelligence. The main thing is, as Valéry put it, in a beautiful phrase, that art should "give birth to what gave it birth." Some of the deep seriousness which inspired Rolf Hochhuth's *The Deputy* will remain, I think, with those who see it.

IT'S ENOUGH TO MAKE YOU WEEP, ISN'T IT?

It has been, by broad consensus, a bad year for the FBI. In their tightly secured precinct on the fifth floor of the Justice Department, FBI officialdom concedes that the Bureau's coveted public image has fallen a few notches.

First there were the criticisms of the FBI's role in the Birmingham bombings and ensuing complaints that it was reluctant to investigate civil rights violations with the vigor that it employs in pursuing, say, kidnappers and bank robbers. Even within some quarters of the Justice Department itself, most notably the Civil Rights Division, the FBI has been taking lumps on its civil rights record.

Then, after the assassination of President Kennedy, the Bureau again became the center of new swarms of suspicions. There were persistent reports that FBI agents had interrogated the suspected Presidential assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, within the week prior to that fateful November 22. These reports were fed by Dallas police officials themselves. One authoritative source had it that FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover placed an angry call to Dallas Police Chief Jesse Curry demanding that this story be stopped.

Throughout its investigation into the President's assassination and the subsequent murder of Oswald, the FBI leaked its version of the events to newsmen on a not-for-attribution basis. Naturally, this was the interpretation that reached the public during the early, formative days of the assassination inquiry. Now the Presidential Commission, headed by Chief Justice Warren, is testing that version against its own reconstruction of the tragedy in Dallas.

Finally, in the Bobby Baker case, the FBI faced its most serious crisis of public confidence when the White House was accused of using classified reports to impugn a witness in the investigation. FBI spokesmen insisted that the Bureau had no part in the leaking of these classified materials to columnist Drew Pearson. This may well be the case. But the public is entitled to a full disclosure of the facts, perhaps through the vehicle of the current Senate investigation.

—From *THE PROGRESSIVE*, March 1964

Leszek Kolakowski

IN PRAISE OF INCONSISTENCY

In our January, 1963 issue we printed "The Priest and the Jester," a brilliant essay by the young Polish philosopher Leszek Kolakowski who has become generally recognized as an intellectual spokesman for east European "revisionism." We are pleased now to print still another essay by this writer in which problems of ideological consistency and the relationship of intellectuals to both ideology and power are discussed in a manner both provocative and, perhaps, Aesopian.—ED.

I am dealing here with consistency in only one sense of the word: agreement, within thought, between general principles and their application. To me, a man is consistent with himself if, having at his disposal a certain number of general principles, he carefully sees to it that all he does and all he thinks should be done remain in absolute agreement with these general principles. Therefore, anyone who believes that killing is evil and refuses to do military service is consistent with himself; so is anyone who is convinced that monogamy is superior to other forms of family life and does not deceive his wife; so is the policeman who believes that traffic regulations must be obeyed and officially reprimands a pedestrian who jaywalks.

There exists, although it is rare in the history of culture, a breed of very gifted men, who belong politically to the extreme right, and whose writings offer valuable material for reflection on the principle of consistency. In France it is the school of Bossuet, de Maistre, Maurras. They were men of some intellectual audacity, not afraid to push their principles to extreme consequences, and who insistently offered their views on every question in which those principles were involved.

Joseph de Maistre knew what was the best order in the world: the order established by God. He also knew what was most precious in that order, and what had to be subordinated to what. He then showed astonishing consistency by applying his general principles to all concrete questions. The world is organized in such a way that evil must exist

in it; since evil exists it must be punished; since this is so, someone must administer the punishment, and that someone is an indispensable element of the social order and hence worthy of respect. And so de Maistre wrote his eulogy of the hangman:

All greatness, all power, all social order rest upon the hangman: He is the horror and the bond of human society. Remove from the world that incomprehensible agent and immediately order gives way to chaos, thrones topple and society vanishes. God who created sovereignty also created punishment.

Hence the hangman, since his profession has an aura of terror, "is an extraordinary being; and a special decree, a *fiat* of the Creator is needed if he is to be a part of the human family. He was created like a world."

Similarly, crimes against the spirit are more serious than crimes against the body, for the welfare of the soul is more important. Crimes against the spirit are also more infamous, for they offend against the majesty of God, which is greater than the majesty of earthly sovereigns; and so de Maistre wrote a eulogy of the Spanish Inquisition. For him Galileo was responsible for his trial because he did not abstain from writing although he had promised to do so; because he defended the thesis that the Copernican system was in harmony with the Bible; and because he wrote in the vulgar tongue and not in Latin. And thus de Maistre wrote a eulogy of the tribunal which tried Galileo.

The Inconsistent Citizen

We may well bow humbly before this magnificent example of consistency which does not hesitate to contemplate the practical application of its own principles. However, we also have the right to add that it is only thanks to inconsistency that humanity has kept alive on this earth. What is demanded of a soldier who goes to war? One thing only: that he act consistently with the principle that it is just to defend one's country. (I say "defend," since in time of war, as everyone knows, we fight only to defend ourselves, and our war is always just.) Battles fought by soldiers armed with this spirit of consistency can only end with the death of all soldiers on one side or the other. What is demanded of the citizen of a state? That he be consistent in his loyalty to the state or to the regime. Such a citizen, therefore, will always be proud to collaborate with the secret police, since he knows that it is necessary to the very existence of the state, its perfection and its progress. To prove that this is so is the easiest thing in the world: Any citizen who hesitates to make regular denunciations to the secret police is clearly in-

consistent. Let us assume that we consider a certain issue to be the most important in the world—that everyone should be required to wear a top hat, for example. How can we, in that case, hesitate to impose our belief by war, by aggression, by provocation, by blackmail, by murder, by intimidation, by terror, by massacre, and by torture?

The breed of the hesitant and the weak, the breed of the inconsistent, of those, in short, who have no trouble eating cutlets for lunch but are quite incapable of wringing a chicken's neck; who don't want to be disloyal to the laws of the state but will not denounce others to the secret police; who believe in telling the truth but rather than tell a distinguished painter that his paintings are daubs will praise him politely—this breed of the inconsistent is still one of the main hopes for the continued survival of the human race. It is indeed the same breed of men among whom some, believing in God and in the superiority of eternal salvation over worldly goods, yet do not ask that the faggots be lit again for heretics; among whom others, not believing in God and accepting the necessity for a revolutionary transformation of society, nevertheless reject methods which seem to favor such changes if they are clearly contrary to the moral tradition in which they were brought up.

In other words, absolute consistency is in practice identical with fanaticism, and inconsistency is the source of tolerance. But if anyone has an iron-clad conviction that his own views on any question alone are true, how can he in good conscience exhibit a benevolent tolerance toward other views? What morality and social values can exist when views that are undoubtedly false, and therefore in one way or another socially harmful, can be freely propagated? By what right is one free to renounce the means necessary to ends which he knows to be just?

Awareness of Contradictions

One may say in this connection that all tolerance is extorted; that we tolerate only that which we are unable to destroy; and that only those are tolerated who are too strong to be destroyed by their enemies. There is certainly a good deal of historical evidence in favor of this thesis, but it does not seem to explain everything. Indeed, if the balance of power were the sole source of tolerance, and if the antagonists were otherwise animated by a fanatical spirit of consistency, they would just have to keep killing each other off until one side was wiped out. If this does not happen, or at least not always, it is a blessed consequence of inconsistency. I repeat, of an inconsistency which need not follow from complete commitment to the principle of tolerance but

which may make its appearance if there is only a partial commitment to that principle.

Inconsistency is simply a hidden awareness of the contradictions of this world. When I mention contradictions, I refer to the well-known historical fact that different kinds of social values have often been introduced into a society by antagonistic forces. If it were universally held that certain values were absolutely and exclusively true and that everything must yield to them, humanity would become an ever-expanding battlefield—which, incidentally, has happened every now and then. In so far as inconsistency is an individual attitude, it is nothing but a collection of uncertainties which conscience keeps in reserve, a continuous awareness that one may well be mistaken or that the enemy may be right. We have in mind here the relations between thought and principle on the one hand and practical behavior on the other. Now of course every thought which is an operative factor in human behavior is the affirmation of a social value. But the world of social values, unlike the world of theory, is not a world of two-value logic. This is one of the chief principles we wish to formulate. Or, in other words, there exist values that are mutually exclusive without ceasing to be values, whereas truths cannot be mutually exclusive without ceasing to be truths. We have the evidence of daily life that this is so. Inconsistency, as we define it here, is simply the refusal, once and for all, to make a choice for all future time between two mutually exclusive values.

To become clearly aware of this permanent situation and this antinomy of the world of values is merely to become consciously inconsistent. Indeed, inconsistency is usually practiced rather than proclaimed. Inconsistency is a constant attempt to cheat an existence which always presents us with alternatives; which places us between two doors of which each is only an entry and neither is an exit, and once we have entered one door we must ceaselessly fight anyone who has entered the other until we have nothing left to fight with, until we die. And so we try to scheme, to maneuver, to employ all kinds of stratagems and subterfuges, underhanded tricks and ruses, escapes and refusals, detours, half-truths and discretions, in order not to be pushed into one of the doors which open in only one direction. This way of cheating existence, these attempts to conciliate incurable antagonisms, to avoid the terrible 'either-or's' between contradictory values—all this is not the consequence of a temporary disorder in the course of a lifetime which will disappear with the coming of a new era. No, it is the consequence, the product of the human condition and its antinomies which are always with us.

We can avoid these antinomies by inconsistency. We can accept

them as part of man's fate in order that one precious value may not be denied us merely because another equally precious value is in constant opposition to it. We therefore try to delay making final choices, until we are surprised by death—the only situation where there really is no choice.

Virtues and Anti-Virtues

At this point someone might well object: Isn't all this merely that wisdom of common sense which Aristotle extolled in his *Nicomachean Ethics*? Indeed, our conception is founded on Aristotle's remark that there exist virtues and anti-virtues, vices and anti-vices. Thrift is a virtue and avarice a vice; but generosity is also a virtue, and waste a vice. Let us therefore, the father of Europe's intellectual culture exhorted us, know how to reconcile opposite virtues without falling into the corresponding vices. Let us be both thrifty and generous, but neither avaricious nor wasteful. As between rashness and cowardice, let us stick to the little ground on which courage and discretion converge in perfect harmony. Between a feverish desire for glory and a timid pusillanimity let us maintain an attitude that would combine a healthy ambition and a becoming modesty. Let us be equally removed from a horrible spirit of vengeance and an excessive humility, let us be both resolute and gentle. For, indeed, the truly generous man is not prodigal but thrifty; the truly brave man is not rash but discreet; etc., etc. . . .

Have we then, in our praise of inconsistency, merely repeated the age-old wisdom of the golden mean? No, we believe that our conception is not in the least related to the theory of the golden mean but is rather its exact opposite. *Nicomachean ethics*! Aristotle's ethics were entirely of this earth, but Aristotle's earth was flat. He personified the idea of the new unity of the Greek world. He then conquered the earth because he also incarnated the universal genius of reconciliation at a time when reconciliation was what humanity needed most. He did this in metaphysics, in politics, and in his ethics. But Aristotle's genius is alien to us because we live in a world of extremes.

If we examine Aristotle's ethics a little more closely we will have no trouble in seeing that Aristotle's chief motivation was the desire for a synthesis. He believed that, between two extremes, it is possible to find a mean which, rejecting whatever is harmful in these extremes, preserves all that is good in each of them. He held that healthy reason reconciles in a harmonious synthesis the elements which an absence of moderation turns into opposites. In other words, Aristotle believed that antagonistic human attitudes which explode into social conflicts are not antagonisms occurring naturally in this world, but are the product of

very harmful abuses due to the absence of common sense. These opposites are therefore the work of man, who abuses, in one way or another, the goods of this world.

The Reality of Values

The praise of inconsistency which we have presented here is founded on a very different principle. This principle asserts that antagonisms between social values do not derive from their being abused. Hence, these antagonisms are not merely apparent and cannot be overcome by sage moderation; they are immanent in the world of values and cannot be reconciled by any harmonizing synthesis. A reasonable inconsistency does not achieve a synthesis between the two extremes, since it knows that such a synthesis does not exist and that these social values are by their very nature mutually exclusive. The reality of values is inconsistent, i.e., it is composed of antagonistic elements. These elements cannot all be accepted as true simultaneously; yet each of them demands complete acceptance. This is not a logical contradiction, since values are not theoretical theses. It is a contradiction inherent in the world of human behavior.

Inconsistency is therefore the attempt to adopt an attitude that assumes we are aware of the situation; an attitude which recognizes that the extremes cannot be reconciled and yet does not wish to renounce either of them since it considers both to be values. We do not mean by this that any concrete contradiction between two values at any given moment is forever unsurmountable. Our thesis does not refer to any pair of contradictions in a definite situation, but to a situation which necessarily implies contradiction; and we are considering this situation only in respect to that aspect. In other words, we believe that contradictions which actually exist may well be overcome so that a synthesis is established between them; but we also believe, in accordance with the entire experience of history, that a contradiction which vanishes is merely replaced by a new contradiction, so that no universal synthesis is possible.

In the world in which we act, contradictory elements cannot be reconciled. Those that are reconciled no longer belong to the world in which we act but to a world that is already gone and towards which we no longer have to take a position. Contradictions haunt us as long as we act within a world of values, or simply as long as we exist.

The Will of the People

Let us take an extremely simple example, drawn from current politics. We believe that peoples have the right to self-determination. We

also believe that certain important social institutions which have been preserved in the life of our people are harmful to its development. Moreover, we know that our people are beyond any doubt very deeply attached to these institutions and pay no attention to our arguments on this subject. We ourselves have rejected the consolations of religion, and are deeply convinced that the influence of religious institutions on public life should not be preserved. However, not only is this influence still at work, but it is in accordance with the indisputable will of the people. How should we behave in this situation? We do not want to repudiate either of the two principles, which in this situation are clearly antagonistic. We don't want to demand the suppression of an institution which the great majority of the people wish to uphold. But neither do we wish to renounce the struggle against that institution. It might well be said that this is a trite situation, and that it by no means excludes the possibility of a synthesis. Indeed, such a synthesis will be worked out, in a historical perspective in which the nation will grow up and become so enlightened that the present contradictions will no longer exist. Right now, however, we should, acting in a spirit of perfect consistency, enlighten our people so that they accept our principles and will at some future date abolish of their own free will the institutions which we believe act as a brake on their development.

Unfortunately, this Solomon-like wisdom does not dispel our doubts. Obviously, nothing stops us from hoping that in some remote future, measured by the passage of generations, the will of the people will have changed so much and their consciousness will be so different that our contradiction will vanish. But such a hope seems to be of very little use for immediate and practical action.

Let us suppose that I have to vote on a bill to introduce religious instruction into public schools where it is not given so far—or, alternatively, to abolish such instruction. I have only two choices: I must vote either for what I believe to be the will of the people, or for what I think is really good for them. I must vote; this obligation has been forced upon me by a situation beyond my control. I cannot follow both my principles at once, but I don't want to reject either of them. This example is not drawn from theoretical speculation, nor is it too specific. Many deputies in many parliaments vote for a bill which they secretly hope will be defeated.

Conflicting Loyalties

In our example, the internal antinomy of the principle of tolerance is eternal and eternally insoluble: How can we proclaim and practice tolerance toward intolerant opinions and movements? If we reduce to

silence such opinions and movements, we act contrary to the principle of tolerance; but we also act contrary to this principle if we tolerate them, since we thus offer them the opportunity to take power and to suppress the practice of tolerance. We derive but small consolation from the hope that at some future date this contradiction may be resolved, either because we have exterminated all enemies of tolerance and thus can be tolerant of all, or because the intolerant movements will have repudiated their intolerance. In day-to-day decisions and in practical politics these perspectives are of infinitesimal value.

Our examples are not imaginary. Our lives are lived under the strain of contradictory loyalties. We must choose between conflicting loyalties in concrete situations, and act in favor of one at the expense of another, without repudiating the other altogether. We are loyal to individuals, to our own philosophy, to chance associations, to organizations, to nations, to parties, to regimes and friends, to ourselves and our neighbors, to our own nature and our convictions, to practical causes and universal principles. How many loyalties we have, in how many insurmountable conflicts they involve us!

Where a constant conflict exists, genuine synthesis is rarely achieved. Rather, apparent and deceiving syntheses are embraced so that we may seem consistent with ourselves. After all, the one value which has been instilled into us since childhood is consistency. Our proposition, which should make us realize that consistency in such cases is an ideological fiction, tends at least to eliminate one kind of conflict—that which arises out of the belief in the value of consistency. Let us therefore resolve this contradiction in at least one area, by proclaiming that the world is contradictory. For indeed, contradictions are multiplied when their existence is not recognized. In other words, to praise inconsistency also means to repudiate a certain value—that of a self-consistent life. The contradiction between the value of a self-consistent life and the value of an ordinary, common-sense life may be the kind of contradiction that can be abolished unilaterally, i.e., not by achieving a synthesis but by repudiating one of its terms.

Basic Human Situation

The question immediately arises: Can we really proclaim the principle of inconsistency in a perfect, that is, a self-consistent form? Are there not events in life towards which we should behave with perfect consistency and thus contradict our repudiation of consistency? This question must be answered in the affirmative: There are such events, and we call them basic human situations.

Basic human situations are situations in which tactical considera-

tions cease to be valid, i.e., situations toward which our moral attitude remains invariable whatever the circumstances. If a man is dying of hunger and I can offer him food, there is no set of circumstances in which I can say with justice, "However, from the tactical point of view it would be better to let him starve to death." Or, if I cannot help him, to say, "The best thing to do is ignore it." Such basic human situations include clearcut military aggression, genocide, torture, oppression of the helpless.

In basic human situations the values of inconsistency no longer apply. Here, we are abruptly faced with a two-value world. No, our praise of inconsistency is itself inconsistent. The value of inconsistency has certain limits, within which it is valid. They are the limits within which reality is contradictory, and reality is contradictory only up to a certain point. (I refer throughout to the reality of social values, not reality as a subject of theoretical analysis.) For it is also true—and let us consider this carefully—that to be consistent in one's inconsistency is to deny by an act (the practice of consistency) something whose affirmation (the affirmation of inconsistency) is the content of that act. Hence we find ourselves in an impossible situation and fall into an antinomy. So let us be also inconsistent in our inconsistency, or in other words, let us apply the principle of inconsistency to inconsistency itself.

But, it will be objected, it is only by practicing inconsistency in its extreme form that we become fully consistent to the practice of inconsistency. Indeed, if we are always inconsistent but our inconsistency is fully self-consistent, we will not always be inconsistent. On the contrary, it is only when we are not always inconsistent that we become absolutely inconsistent.

In other words, we have arrived at the most classic of all antinomies—a consistent inconsistency is not an inconsistent consistency, since it excludes inconsistency itself from the principle of inconsistency; on the other hand an inconsistent inconsistency is, precisely, a consistent inconsistency. So we propose to keep the principle of consistency to this extent: We will be inconsistent in our practice of the principle of inconsistency. And we can make our praise of the principle of inconsistency perfect only by protesting against the practice of perfect inconsistency.

So much in praise of inconsistency. Beyond this, nothing can be said. It must be done.

(Translated by I. A. LANGNAS and ANN ROSENHAFT)

S. M. Miller

THE POLITICS OF POVERTY

A few short years ago it was widely assumed that poverty was declining in the U.S. Indeed, to think about the poor was to reveal an inability to overcome the "trauma of the 1930's," for the vast improvement in levels of living was supposed to have eliminated all but a "hard core" of poverty.

Now a spate of books has upset this complacent picture: Michael Harrington has feelingly portrayed the strain of poverty; Robert Lampman, Gabriel Kolko, and Leon Keyserling have revealed its extent. The "income curtain" which separated the American haves from the American have-nots has been drawn back, and we can no longer assume that poverty is dwindling or is far less destructive than it used to be. The Census Bureau expert, Herman Miller, has shown that the income of the poor generally and Negroes in particular, has not increased relatively. True, the Second World War stimulated a great economic change in the United States, bringing some advantages to low-income groups.¹ But since 1944 the income gap between the poor and the better-off has not narrowed at all.²

Income inequality seems, if anything, to be increasing. Vast technological change (subsumed under the loose term "automation") further reduces employment opportunities for the displaced and the poorly educated. Coupled with a limited economic growth, the effects are to prevent new jobs from emerging and to increase or maintain unemployment, especially of the disadvantaged.

But while poverty is an American problem, it has not yet reached its full stature as a *political* problem. The beginning efforts of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations are small-scale programs. Moreover,

• NOTE: A fuller version of this essay will appear in Irving L. Horowitz, ed., *The New Sociology*, Oxford University Press, a collection of essays in honor of C. Wright Mills.

¹ Robert J. Lampman, "The Low Income Population and Economic Growth," Study Paper No. 12, Joint Economic Committee of Congress, December 16, 1959, p. 12.

² Herman Miller, "Is the Income Gap Closing? No," *New York Times Magazine Section*, November 11, 1962.

they are not aimed at reforming the economy and society so that poverty is prevented. Whether poverty becomes the issue that it should, will largely depend on what the poor themselves do. To be effective, they will need allies. But it is they who are the likely "movers and shakers."

Who Are the Poor?

How many Americans can be considered "poor" depends on how poverty is defined. It is difficult to say where the "poverty line" is; Lampman employs \$2500 for a family of four as his base, while Keyserling uses a \$4000 income cut-off without reference to family size. Whatever the definition, the poor range from about 16 per cent of the population to a maximum of 25 per cent. The lower the income level employed, the more unlike the general population are the poor.

The emphasis in most reports on the frequency of poverty—i.e., what percentage of a given group is poor—has obscured some important facts about poverty. Despite the great incidence of poverty among Negroes—for example, 35 per cent of Negro adults in Detroit were reported as unemployed in 1960—*most of the poor are white* (this is true even in the South). Similarly, while a high percentage of farm people are poor, almost 50 per cent of the poor live in cities.

The poor are a varied group. The farm poor live in areas where economic sustenance has withered with the demise of the family farm and the development of capitalistic farming. The rural non-farm, small town and small city poor suffer from the decay of local industry, whether it be the coal mines of West Virginia or the one-industry textile towns of the East. Industrial centers like Detroit and Pittsburgh suffer from high productivity and limited demand. The youthful poor possess limited or out-moded skills and inadequate educational credentials in a high-technology, certificate-demanding economy. The aged poor are economically unacceptable and are sustained on inadequate social security and old-age assistance programs. In all, one-fifth of the poor are supported by "welfare."

Farms and small-town America are large producers of the poor; the big cities are increasingly the receivers of the poor (as well as generating a poor class themselves). Many from "old America" move to the slum areas of large cities where they join the left-over third-generation immigrant population and the other poor of the metropolis.³

Farm and rural areas *push* people toward the cities, but the metropolitan areas are not prepared to accept them. By contrast, an urban

³ Cf. the rich discussion in Richard A. Cloward and Lloyd E. Ohlin, *Delinquency and Opportunity: A Theory of Delinquent Gangs*, Glencoe: Free Press, 1960, pp. 193-211.

labor force was needed in the beginning stages of Britain's industrial progress and, as E. H. Carr argues, public policy permitted market forces to starve people off the land. In our case, we do not have cities needing much of the labor of the migrants or the older urban poor. (The service industries—hotels, restaurants—of large cities are the main employers of the urban poor.)

The urban poor is composed of many strata: refugees from the land and older settlers of the urban slums, Southern mountaineer whites and Southern Negroes, Puerto Ricans and Mexican-Americans. Despite their diversity, the poor in the largest urban centers are rapidly evolving into a "colored" poor of Negroes and Spanish-name persons. These are the groups that seem most likely to be politicized. *It is the confluence of class and race issues which gives the poor a much greater political potential than is usually true of low income, depressed populations.*

This group might be described as a "new" working class. The "old" working class, who still comprise the bulk of skilled and semi-skilled union members as well as the majority of blue collar workers, is made up of "old-settler" Protestant recruits largely from farm and rural areas and the second and third generation of the predominantly Catholic Eastern and Southern European nations.⁴ The "new" working class is more likely to be "colored," unskilled, in low-wage service and non-unionized industries, e.g., hospitals.

More than a third of the heads of low-income families are not in the labor force—that is, they are not classified by Census statisticians as currently employed or actively engaged in looking for work if they are unemployed. But I would venture that many of the adult poor who are "outside" of the labor force have worked and would work if jobs were available. The aged poor, who are a large percentage of the "non-workers," are less characterized by an orientation to work but continue to share many economic and political interests with the new working class. The welfare poor, particularly in families headed by women, probably have a limited relation to work, but the reluctance should not be as casually assumed as it is by many commentators today. Yet the aged and welfare recipients frequently have long-run interests in common with the new working class. When the welfare poor work, they are in the occupations which characterize the "new" working class. Many of the poor shift back and forth between low-level unskilled work and government support; either way, they have common interests in banding together to improve their conditions.

⁴ For a more detailed analysis of current sociological terminology, see S. M. Miller and Frank Riessman, "The Working-Class Subculture: A New View," *Social Problems*, IX, 1961, pp. 86-97.

The Capacity for Action

The concept of the "new" working class is more a fishing net than a hard container. Nevertheless, it emphasizes some common economic issues which many low-income people face in affluent America and raises the possibility that they might act politically to do something about it. The term "new" working class implies that low-income people are trying to get a foothold into urban industrial life.

Harrington has pictured the poor as passive, inert and apathetic, lacking generally the capacity for action. I find this portrait misleading. The aged have been active in political movements—from the Townsend Plan to the fight for Medicare. Mexican-Americans have recently won political control in Crystal City, a small Texas town. In many cities, the young and adult poor have organized to protest their conditions, as recently in Chicago where women on welfare strongly demonstrated against the cessation of allowances. And what the Negro has done in recent years constitutes a virtual revolution in American life.

World War I was the breakthrough for the Southern Negro. During and immediately after the war, great numbers of them left for the North, and in the following years there was a steady if not spectacular movement of Negroes out of the South. Again, a war led to a rapid change; during and after World War II, there was a rapid movement of Negroes into urban centers, both North and South. The Negro is no longer primarily a rural resident; soon, a majority of Negroes will be living in Northern cities.

The importance and power of Negroes in the large Northern cities was demonstrated in the 1960 election in which an almost solid Democratic vote in many Negro districts swung the populous industrial states into Kennedy's column. The increase in the number of Southern Negro voters accentuates the national role of Negroes. Legislative reapportionment, which will increase the importance of the urban vote, though not as much as it will the suburban vote, should make the Negro vote more effective in state elections. With the rapid concentration of Negroes in central cities, they will increasingly become a power group there; in New York City, it now seems a Democratic Party practice that the Borough President of Manhattan be Negro. A Negro Mayor in one of our large cities is a distinct possibility in the next years. The interests of Presidents Johnson and Kennedy in poverty results from the potential importance of the votes of the poor.

Negroes then are beginning to develop a political "clout" which will give them the ability to demand and get services and rights at both the federal and local levels. Formally, these rights have almost always

been available to all; in practice, only to whites and more slowly to working-class whites. As the whites—first the Irish, later the Jews and still more recently the Italians—strengthened their organizations, they were able to obtain a more equitable share of political and economic rewards. This same process is beginning with Negroes and at a slower rate with many other members of the new working class. *It promises to be the decisive political condition of the sixties in this country.*

The political awareness of the Negroes already has been realized, and it is a distinct possibility for others of the poor as well. The inter-meshing of a variety of economic and class factors will lead to political mobilization. Usually, the long-term economically depressed are unlikely candidates for a dynamic political movement, but the racial as well as economic factors are propelling the poor toward politics, whether they be Negro, Mexican-American or Puerto Rican.

Nor should we ignore the possibilities of political organization of the poor whites. Bayard Rustin's suggestion that white students might best work in poor white areas rather than Negro areas is important. But in the next months the political pressures will come from the "colored" poor.

Relation of Middle Class to Poor

Many of the leaders of the "colored" poor will probably come from middle-class families providing qualities and abilities that may not emerge early among others of their group. E. Franklin Frazier's notion of a "black bourgeoisie" that in rising cuts itself off from the mass of Negroes, was probably overstated when he expressed it a few years ago; it undoubtedly is today. Less and less does "going up" mean "going out" of the Negro community: even those who can and do move out of the Negro ghetto frequently maintain ties with it and are deeply and actively concerned about the Negro poor. While older successful Negroes are less likely to be identified with poorer Negroes and are more likely to emphasize "progress," they frequently are pushed along by the dynamism and pressure of the younger generation of Negroes.⁵

The cohesion which comes from racial issues might serve to separate each of the poor ethnic groupings from one another, leading each to be concerned only with issues peculiar to it. This self-centering pressure and inter-ethnic hostility may, however, be overcome by the large number of issues which are common to all of the poor.

The high rate of unemployment among the new working class, their

⁵ Obviously, contrasting patterns exist among Negroes and other ethnic groups of the poor. The middle-class Negro who does not want his children to have contact with low-income, educationally-deficient Negro children is a frequently cited example.

low wages, their inadequate housing as they suffer the ravages (and reap little of the benefits) of urban redevelopment, the poor schooling offered their children, the neglect of public services in their neighborhoods, the frequent callousness of the police and welfare departments, the bilking by merchants—in short, their second-class economic and political status—provide the issues which may mold the new working class into a potent political force. To understand these possibilities, we must first understand the economic situation.

The United States today is increasingly moving into a dual economy in which the main sector is characterized by the provision of high standards of living, somewhat stable employment, and other rewards for those who are able to stay in it. On the other hand, the marginal sector centers around low-level service trades and occupations, filled by individuals of low skill who are from minority groups or left-over immigrant populations, receiving relatively little of what the economy produces. Those in the marginal economy frequently are unable to get jobs; when they do work, wages are low. (Twelve per cent of all those receiving welfare assistance in New York City, including the aged, are in families whose head is employed, but who does not earn enough to support his family.) Moreover, job insecurity is great and individuals are frequently unemployed for considerable periods of time. In this “colonial” situation, contrasting a successful “white economy” and a meager “bush economy,” there are wide disparities; furthermore, gains in the main economy do not rapidly trickle down to those in what Harrington has called the “other America.”

Indeed, increasing productivity has meant that many people are being squeezed out of the affluent economy (e.g., auto workers in Detroit who are permanently laid off despite the high production of cars). Those who can make the affluent economy—and making it depends largely upon education—do relatively well. Those who live in the marginal economy do not automatically progress with the gains of the affluent economy. And the result is further inequality.

In undeveloped societies, the rise of a middle class is expected to mitigate the extreme variation in standards of living. In present-day America the expansion of what C. Wright Mills emphasized was a new middle class no longer reduces the number of the poor. And the growing affluence of the upper and middle classes is increasing the *relative deprivation* of the poor.

Inequality as a Central Issue

“Relative deprivation” points to inequalities in the distribution of income and wealth rather than to those living below a specified income

level who cannot purchase an adequate basket of goods and services. The number of poor may be slowly declining but the extent of inequality (e.g., the differences in the percentages of gross national product going to the upper 5% and the bottom 20%) is increasing.

The great decline in inequality took place during World War II. Since then, the rate of decline in the degree of inequality (as well as the percentage of the population who are poor) has sharply slackened. There has actually been an increase since 1949 in the concentration of wealth assets owned by the upper one per cent.⁶ The income advantage of the "diploma elite" over those who have only "some college," high school diplomas or are school dropouts is increasing. The income spread between skilled workers and unskilled which was narrowed during this century is now beginning to widen. Upper-level blue collar workers who were improving relative to lower-level white collar are now losing ground to these white-collar groupings. And the lower-level white-collar occupations are falling behind the upper white-collar occupations. *Inequality as well as poverty is a central issue.*

In World War II, the percentage of unemployed was reduced drastically. The concept of "unemployables" was largely abandoned and many people who had not been able to work for a long time, and perhaps regarded themselves as unable to perform on a job, discovered that their abilities and effort were needed. In Britain, Peter Townsend has remarked, it was believed in the thirties that 500,000 of the unemployed were "unemployable." Yet in wartime it was discovered that the accurate figure was 100,000.

We must, however, recognize that today's problems are increasingly complicated by the growing skill requirements of our complex industrial machinery. High economic growth does not automatically assure jobs for the unskilled; it does not guarantee that any kind of labor will be employed in a rising economic market. And some of the poor, especially the aged, are unlikely to work regardless of the demand for labor. Nevertheless, a high level of employment would increase opportunities for the poor. High production might not draw people into those industries requiring high skill, but it would lead to an increased demand in service and other industries in which labor requirements are less rigid.

A high sustained demand for labor may encourage more youths to stay in school and be trained for skilled jobs. But when jobs are scarce, and there is no assurance as to what kind of skills will be necessary, it is unlikely that many youths will risk preparing themselves for the un-

⁶ Robert J. Lampman, *The Share of Top Wealth-Holders in National Wealth, 1922-56*, No. 74, National Bureau of Economic Research, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962, p. 24.

known. Willingness to be an adventurer grows when there is some reason for confidence in the outcome. But with rapid technological change and low economic growth, the value of further training is frequently problematic.

Social Action and Self-Help Programs

Keynesian traditionalism has emphasized "heating up the economy" as the way to eliminate poverty, but it ignores the large numbers of our poor who are not attached to the main economy and will not benefit from its advances. By contrast, those who advocate special programs aimed at specific groups of the poor underestimate the effect of general economic conditions on the prospects of the poor. The first position is the "economic growth" argument of the Council of Economic Advisors and Leon Keyserling; the second is the "structural" position of Galbraith and many social workers. Both kinds of programs are needed today and the likelihood is that too little will be done along both lines. Special programs might be used as a substitute for the general charging up of the economy. Projects that can only be successful over a long period will be used as though they have immediate pay-offs. A temporary "heating up" of the economy combined with special projects and social services may prevent the emergence of programs for deeper changes that will reduce inequality as well as poverty. *We are searching for economic aspirin and cosmetic surgery when sweeping changes in the structure and control of our economy are needed.*

In the immediate future, the poor are the most likely to provide leverage for significant change. The common need for decent employment and social services, which binds together the various groups of the poor, can be satisfied only through political action; for today economic issues are political issues.

Political action for the poor implies action at the grass roots—in the community. Saul Alinsky in Chicago, Jesse Gray in Harlem rent strikes and others elsewhere have demonstrated the possibilities of social action and self-help programs; and in many communities, low-income Negroes have been drawn into civil rights actions.

While indigenous leadership in the poverty areas of the large city is an important consideration, the thing that can be done most effectively by outsiders—non-colored, non-poor—coming into the impoverished areas is to try to develop the kinds of issues which encourage the growth of indigenous leadership. The situation is not, of course, an easy one. In many communities of the new working class the immediate prospect of concerted action toward political or any other kind of goals seems unlikely. These are communities which have very little internal dynam-

ics of control and no real momentum. There are other communities of the poor which are controlled largely by the police; these are the areas in which a counter-movement seems likely. Finally, there are areas in which local control is imminent and even to a limited degree already present.

The "gripes" of low-income neighborhoods—whether about unemployment, the welfare department, the regulations of public housing, the behavior of the police—are political issues, and will emerge as such if the new working class acquires a political style. At first, the issues may very well have to be local and immediate, directly affecting the new working class. But many of the problems facing the new working class cannot be resolved at local levels; they need national action. Linking local issues to broader national concerns and building an orientation to the national political scene is one of the most difficult and important tasks facing local leaders.

Involving the Union Movement

Thus far political mobilization among the new poor is more potential than real, and for this potential to be realized the labor unions will have to respond far more than they have thus far. For if the unions fail to be concerned about the new working class, economic issues will less effectively bind together the various groupings of the poor against cross-cutting ethnic and racial ties.

The opening of the craft occupations to Negroes and unionization of the low-paid service industries is of utmost importance. At the present time, this new working class, largely "colored" in composition, is barely touched by the unions. Consequently, we are moving into a situation where a largely white union movement covers less and less of the labor force, and the new "colored" labor force suffers outside of both the unions and the main economic structure.

If there is no concerted effort to bring Negroes into unions, whether by organizing new industries or opening up existing unions, the result may well be the demise of the unions as a strong force in the United States, for there would then be no moral basis for the claim that they represent the under-represented. A move toward the new unskilled minority worker would propel the unions to examine new issues in American political life by providing them with a broad class base. This base is now lacking: increasing income differentiation places those union members who are well-paid at an advantage, while the low-paid improve their conditions at a slower pace. Problems of poverty, urban redevelopment, discrimination, political representation—all the issues which are central to the new working class in American society—will again come

to the political fore if the unions move toward this group.

Once they are in unions, it may be important to have closer relations between unions and communities than is common. If I may draw an example from a union beyond the pale, the St. Louis local of the Teamsters, directed by Harold Gibbons, tried the innovation of having community stewards as well as shop stewards. Community stewards, it is reported, served to help members living in neighborhoods to organize with others. For example, rat infestation in certain areas was a great problem: the community stewards organized to exert pressure on City Hall to provide services. Other unions have had community involvement in a variety of ways, but it is an emphasis that needs to be deepened and broadened.

Poverty, like most other economic questions, is now a political issue and its elimination demands political measures. It is an issue as to what level of economic product we will attain and how it gets distributed through the marketplace, the tax system and the social services. Increasingly, our concern should be with inequality as well as poverty. Raising the problems of poverty and inequality to a political level and the encouragement of the new working class toward political articulateness are the bases of a revived liberalism in the sixties.

A Conversation on JOBS, MACHINES and PEOPLE

Gerard Piel: In the decade from 1950 to 1960 the Gross National Product increased by between 70 and 100 percent, and the factory labor force remained almost constant. The 1960 statistics show that well under half of the labor force is engaged in productive work as distinguished from distribution or white-collar employment. And if you add up the people in uniform, those employed in the armament industries, those on public payrolls, and those who are unemployed, a full 25 percent of our labor force is outside the normal processes of what we call our free enterprise economy.

Robert Theobald: What is even more startling is that between 1957 and 1962 about six or seven out of every ten jobs were created in the public sector, practically all of them in teaching. Only around 175,00 to 200,000 jobs a year were created in the private sector in this five-year period.

Ralph Helstein: The total figures for that five-year period show that of the millions of jobs required only a million or so were produced by private industry.

—From pamphlet of same title, Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions.

NOTEBOOK

Sidney Lens

SOUTH BEND: TRAGEDY AT STUDEBAKER

The nine workers standing semicircle in the entrance-way of UAW Local 5 in South Bend were neither angry nor dour. The full shock of their new status as permanent alumni of the Studebaker Company had not yet hit them. Still another paycheck would come next week and, after that, there would be \$36-a-week unemployment compensation for twenty-six weeks.

There was about them, however, a mood of bewilderment and unreality, such as one notes at the wake of a man who died before his time.

One worker, perhaps 55, was discussing his Blue Cross. For 15 years he had felt secure against a siege of sickness. A health and welfare plan, negotiated by his union, and to which he contributed \$1.84 a week, provided for hospital care, surgical benefits, and life insurance. He wasn't sure now whether he was still protected. "If I have to take Blue Cross, that'll cost me \$16 a month," he said. "Maybe I won't even be able to get it."

He recalled that when a fellow-worker "was taken to the hospital last year his bill was \$2,000 the first time and \$3,000 the second time. If we lose our insurance the only way to

handle a load like that would be to mortgage my house." He thought for a second: "Suppose a guy doesn't have a house?"

The discussion continued through the day, with new faces joining the circle, old ones leaving for home. There were reports that the Litton Company was going to buy the plant. That brought a speculation as to how many men they would employ. One chap raised some doubts about the federal job retraining program. "What's the sense of retraining," he asked, "if there's no jobs?"

The plight of the Studebaker workers, whose plant—except for a small segment devoted to parts production—was being shut down after 50 years of operation, was not dire and would not be for some time. Their average wage had been \$2.90 an hour, their average age 54, and their average seniority 25 years plus. Many had put aside a few dollars for just this sort of rainy day. Some had wives working. Almost all had grown children on whom they might lean in case of emergency.

Certainly their situation was better than that of some 15,000 or 20,000 workers in defense plants, around the

country, who were being laid off the same month. Perhaps because Studebaker had been such a prominent company, the government was reacting with surprising vigor. President Johnson had instructed five federal departments to find jobs for the displaced men. The U.S. labor department was allotting \$771,000 to retrain 1,500, some of whom would have to be taught simple reading and writing. (If similar expenditures were made for every unemployed worker in the country, that would come to a cool \$2 billion.) A dozen local committees were trying to lure outside corporations to take over the six million square feet of Studebaker plant. The UAW was canvassing factories in a five or six state area, and had already dug up a dozen or two dozen spots for the Studebaker men. In trying to find work in an economy where six to nine per cent were workless, they were doing all that could be done, like a conscientious doctor who attends a terminal patient.

Little by little the tragedy of the Studebaker workers, whose whole adult life had been given up to the sprawling plant a few blocks from the Local 5 office, would be made invisible. Thirteen hundred were still employed on parts production and probably would continue. Of the 7,000 laid off permanently, 800 were eligible for social security or the company retirement plan. The 750 skilled craftsmen were no problem. If they were not so hesitant about moving out of town, they could have been placed by now.

The problem began with the remaining workers. Twenty-two per cent of the Studebaker men were

Negroes, almost all unskilled. Jim "Red" Hill, the UAW International Representative who himself came out of Studebaker, estimates that perhaps half the Negroes will still be jobless by the end of 1964, with the other half migrating to parts unknown looking for work. The whites would fare better. Hill figures that one-third of them will still be jobless by December 1964 or will have resigned themselves to the permanent relief rolls. One-fourth will wander away, and the rest will be fitted into lower-paid jobs. If Litton takes over Studebaker and begins work on an \$87 million military order, that might absorb 500 men. Not much more can be expected.

In Local 5's \$200,000 building on South Main Street, President Woody Frick hugs the telephone, waiting for calls from prospective employers and advising workers, for the time being, to take whatever is offered them. Harassed by questions he cannot answer, Woody reflects the uncertainty of his followers. His Local will survive, for it continues to serve the 1,300 men still working on parts, and it will soon be assigned other jurisdiction by the UAW. Its comfortable headquarters is paid for and it has a sizable bundle in the bank. But there is no doubt, as one speaks to the Local 5 President, that he would be happier unemployed himself than having to carry his heavy responsibility.

Periodically Woody joins the men in the hall to answer a few informal questions, but he cannot assuage their insecurity, for what they have lost is not only material benefits but their sense of security and self-esteem. For most of them life will never again be the same.

The hospital, surgical and life insurance plans—contrary to the fears of the man worried about Blue Cross—can be continued by the laid-off unionists, providing they pay not only their former share but also that of the company—a total of \$4.06 a week, as against the previous \$1.84. This will be a burden because Indiana's maximum unemployed pay is \$36 a week. A large portion of the men will doubtless maintain their coverage, for at their age who knows what can happen.

By contrast, disability payments are suspended entirely. The supplemental unemployment benefits are exhausted, since the fund is down to a mere \$30,000 as a result of previous layoffs. The supplemental pension fund, which now has \$22 million, will continue to provide for the present 2,175 retirees and perhaps the 800 who may join their ranks, but according to the UAW, none of those now under 60 can hope to benefit from it in later years. There just isn't enough money in the kitty.

At least as significant as such losses, however, is the loss of *personal* security. The Studebaker workers were part of an industrial elite. They had been rooted in this plant and they gained from it a sense of belonging, a feeling of status. They had been among the first—they claim to have been the second local in the UAW—to unionize back in the 1930's; and they had steadily improved their economic position without too many strikes. They had acquired most of the trappings of middle class America. Their November 27 union paper called on them to support the "Christmas Seal Campaign," and their Pres-

ident and Vice-President reminded them "to give thanks to God for the many rights and privileges we enjoy as citizens of the greatest country in the world."

As B. J. Widick pointed out a few years ago: "Sociologists, looking for blue-collar workers who were middle-class not only outside the plant, but inside, would have difficulty in finding a better study than the Studebaker payroll." Unlike the Chrysler workers, they were not harried by intolerable speed-up; their grievance machinery was ample; and until 1954 their earnings were far higher than that of counterparts in Detroit. Insofar as factory workers can achieve stability and security, the Studebaker workers seemed to have it.

Now they were being remorselessly downgraded, and though their future travail was not yet fully evident they could feel in the marrow of their bones the beginning of a descent into what Michael Harrington has called the "invisible poor."

To shout against this fate, to demonstrate, or to march on Washington would upset their own image of middle-class status. Some might, but not the majority. The men in the union corridors contented themselves with putting the blame not on the Company, but its management. The villain for them was the recently-resigned President, Sherwood H. Egbert, a "whiz boy" who had pushed them around in the last couple of years and had fathered the Avanti model which turned out to be the final fiasco. Under Egbert the auto division, which accounted for just half the \$400 million sales of Studebaker, had produced the Avanti, which because of small

production, cost about \$10,000 per car to make and then sold for just half—"the only \$10,000 car," said the members of Local 5, "you can buy for \$5,000." Egbert is reputed to have dreamed up this experiment while browsing through hot rod books at an airport. "He was spending," says Red Hill, "our workers' future."

The Company, said the men, had been inept and short-sighted. It had earned fortunes during the war by producing trucks for Russia, on a cost-plus basis, and a personnel carrier called the Weasel. When the war ended, it was the first auto company to come out with a brand new car and until 1953 or 1954 it enjoyed boom days. At its peak it employed 23,000 workers and pre-empted about four per cent of the auto market. But it failed to plow back its profits to set up an effective dealers organization or to provide adequate credits for consumers. Its descent was inevitable. In 1963 its auto sales were a minuscule .91 per cent of the national market, and it was losing money in this division at the rate of \$10 million a year.

It does not occur to most Studebaker workers that they are part of a national or social tragedy. They think in pragmatic terms: Egbert, dealerships, credits. Their despair is localized and restrained, not educated enough to see the total ramifications. In recent years one after another of the auto companies has been driven to the wall by the intense competition of the Big Three. Kaiser bit the dust in 1955, Hudson in 1957, Packard in 1958, to join a long list of others. In this insane hurly-burly of the auto industry it costs \$27 to \$30 million for

a complete body and motor changeover, \$4 million merely for a styling face-lift—which is needed each year—and \$8 to \$12 million for a body changeover. A company like Studebaker just could not meet these costs.

By diversifying so that autos were but one half of its operations, Studebaker has been able to show a net profit each year. Now the shutdown in South Bend—which, by the way, quadruples unemployment in that city from 2½ per cent to 10 per cent of the work force—offers Studebaker a great opportunity for gain. The loss on its plant will be written off against profits in other operations, thus providing at least \$5 or \$6 million a year in increased income for a number of years to come. Company spokesmen were understandably coy when asked about the value of their plant, for while semi-closed it will bring them great profits, whereas in full operation it lost them almost a million dollars a month. Furthermore, by transferring production to the 250,000-square-foot plant in Canada, where only fifty cars are now being produced daily, it can ward off the expense of having to buy back from its dealers the cars they have in stock—as provided for in Studebaker franchises. By pretending to remain in operation and selling perhaps 20,000 to 30,000 cars a year—an insignificant amount in a seven million annual market—they will be doing quite well financially. On total sales of perhaps \$300 million in all branches, they will be pocketing three or four times what they do now with \$400 million. In our "free enterprise" system this is considered a justified excuse for sending 7,000 people to the scrapheap.

As for the men now on the street, they rankle because in 1954, under severe pressure by their leaders, they had agreed to a wage cut that cost them 50¢ an hour—in the mistaken belief that such concessions would keep the company afloat. They rankle because since then, in each negotiation session, they have given up benefits won through the years, again to placate a division that was losing money. They rankle because none of these sacrifices availed, and in the end they were laid off with hardly any notice and with the final indignity of being deprived of three holidays with pay—at Christmas and New Year. They rankle because now they are fearful of long term unemployment or a reduction in status to \$1.50 an hour

jobs in service industries.

For a brief moment in 1962, during a 42-day strike—directed mainly against the harshness of Egbert—the Studebaker workers experienced a resurgence of the militancy which made them so vital a force in the 1930's. But there is no one to recreate that mood today. The UAW nationally does not rock the boat of its "boy" in the White House. Its gesticulations about the need for jobs are effete and undramatic. No one is threatening to march on Washington, as would certainly have been done if Eisenhower or Nixon were at the helm. No one threatens to form a national unemployed organization. Studebaker is a symbol of the qualitative decline of unionism itself.

Sidney Tarrow

THE AGONY OF ITALIAN SOCIALISM

The Italian Socialist Party (PSI), after seventy almost unbroken years of political opposition, is now an organic part of the new government in Rome. Representatives of the country's two major ideological camps—the Catholic and the Marxist—sit face-to-face in working collaboration. The Socialists' venerable leader, Pietro Nenni, is Vice-President of the Council of Ministers, and four other Socialists sit at his side.

This is a government whose program makes concessions to the left in economic and urban planning, and vows to initiate the regional decentralization

foreseen in the Constitution of 1947. It has all the trappings of a historic encounter, but its most overt effect to date has been to seriously wound the Socialist Party. Its long-term dangers for Italian Socialism are probably greater than its short-term advantages.

The *centro-sinistra* cabinet was created by a process of elimination. In the early postwar years, Italy was governed by a bizarre coalition of Communists, Socialists and Christian Democrats, which could not outlast the initial period of national reconstruction. With the outbreak of the cold war and the country's subservience to the for-

eign policies of the Atlantic Alliance, the Christian Democrats (DC) gained more-or-less complete control. But this too ended when the DC's charismatic leader, Alcide De Gaspari, died in 1953. Without his prestige, a series of Christian Democratic governments rose and fell, contributing to the chronic instability of the political system. The party, retaining its 40–50 per cent of the electorate largely by demagogic anti-Communist electoral techniques and the support of the Church and the U.S. embassy, was continually frustrated by parliamentary “snipers” in its own ranks. Attempts to govern with the minor parties of the center-left (the Social Democrats and Republicans) or the right (the Liberals) were equally artificial: too many disparate interests had to be satisfied.

It became clear that there was no alternative for the Christian Democrats but an eventual encounter with the Socialists, the country's third largest party. At the same time, the false polarization of Italian politics began to diminish. As long as the cold war had worn the fearsome aspect of armed confrontation, and as long as Italy's weak economic position made it a ward of the United States, the Right and the Left were mutually exclusive armed camps. Only with the launching of Italy's “economic miracle” and the equally miraculous pontificate of John XXIII, could a dialogue begin between Marxists and Catholics. In the parties, a small but articulate group of statesmen—Fanfani in the left wing of the Christian Democrats, La Malfa of the Republicans, Saragat of the Social Democrats—wearied of parliamentary immobilism. They called for a new beginning; a coalition of center and left

with a platform of social reform and political regeneration.

And what of the Nenni Socialists? One of the most interesting parties in Western Europe, and one of the most tragic, the PSI grew out of the intellectual ferment of the late 19th century that spawned much of European Socialism; but the ideas of Sorel and Bakunin, as well as roots in the agricultural proletariat of the Po Valley, lent the PSI an intransigent character. While most of the Socialist parties of Europe were undergoing a process of social-democratization, the PSI retained a powerful revolutionary rhetoric.

The party had led the massive occupation of the factories of 1920; its offices were burned and its activists massacred by roaming fascist *squadre* in 1920–22; and its leaders were the first to be forced into exile by the fascists. It was in exile that a Unity of Action pact was signed with the Communists for the future liberation of Italy. The Communists, nourished from Moscow and commanding an organization hardened by years of clandestine activity, gave a powerful revolutionary thrust to the Resistance movement; and the Socialists followed. The war over, the party's treasury empty and the ranks of its able leadership thinned, there was little else to do. The secession of the PSI's right-wing in 1947 so weakened it that partial dependence upon the Communists became total.

II

But in the late Stalin years, the alliance with the CP became a liability. The Socialist Party had a long and valiant democratic tradition, but its primacy on the left had been usurped

by the Communists, and without independence of action, its vote would dwindle and its glorious army never fight a battle.

The break with the Communists, begun in 1953, was completed after the Khrushchev revelations in 1956. From positions often more intransigent than those of the Communists themselves, the majority of the Socialists moved to an acceptance of structural reform within the capitalist system as the basis for arriving at Socialism, and to a partial acceptance of membership in the Western military bloc. Three successive congresses allowed Nenni, now the architect of party autonomy, to approach cautiously the positions of the center-left. The party's leaders were conscious of pitfalls: the specters of "revisionists" like Leon Blum and Saragat were dour warnings. But they also were conscious of history slipping by; of the working class becoming accustomed to picking up healthy leftovers from the table of welfare capitalism, but never gaining the power to make decisions.

At the same time, a large minority, faithful to the revolutionary tradition of the party, resisted the innovations of Nenni's Autonomists. Aside from a sentimental attachment to working-class unity, the *Sinistra* or Left of the PSI was profoundly conscious of the dangers of sitting at capitalism's table. Italy's still-deprived masses might grow impatient with the Socialist Party's continued inability to gain power, but would they not, the *Sinistra* argued, be profoundly repelled by the prospect of a working-class party doling out the small change of reformism?

The two wings of the PSI crystallized into organized factions. Talk of a

schism on the left began to circulate, but where would the dissidents secede to? The Communists, while welcoming dissent from Nenni's "revisionism," were not eager to absorb the left wing of the PSI: their own ideological travels had taken them to the right of many of the Socialists dissidents.

The logic of the situation continued to evolve. Within the DC, Fanfani, backed by a shaky coalition of left-oriented factions, had gained power. The result was the "trial" *centro-sinistra* of February, 1962, consisting of Christian Democrats, Republicans and Social Democrats. The Socialists, encouraged by Fanfani's willingness to set up a planning commission and to nationalize the vital electrical industry, did not enter the government but supported it on domestic issues and abstained on foreign policy votes.

The Fanfani government resigned after the national elections of June, 1963. The Christian Democrats lost heavily, the Socialists slightly, and the Communist vote rose from 21% to 24% of the electorate. Probably the lost DC votes had not gone directly to the Communists; it was far more likely that the Socialists had picked up the "floating vote" of the center from the Christian Democrats and lost many of its militants to the Communists. This was the interpretation of the PSI left wing, which denounced the party's first venture into coalition politics as "a most clamorous failure."

Centro-sinistra was on everybody's mind, but the reactionary elements within the Christian Democrats, blaming the Fanfani experiment for their electoral losses, were not in an expansive mood. In the new governmental negotiations of last June, they en-

visioned a transitional *centro-sinistra* which would make few concessions to the Socialists. Though Nenni was still anxious to do business, a group of influential Socialists, led by the brilliant and unpredictable Riccardo Lombardi, refused to support him, and the negotiations collapsed. The result was the "caretaker" government of Giovanni Leone, which would manage the store until the Socialist Congress of October could decide the party's position.

III

The intra-party debate erupted in the summer months, the Autonomists declaring the need for a "tactical" alliance with the DC and the *Sinistra* openly talking of schism. Lombardi, who grew up in the hard school of Milanese labor politics and cherishes a vision of the Socialists once more at the vanguard of the working class, strove to destroy the growing conviction that joining the government and holding the party together were incompatible. A note attributed to him in August held that

all the parties involved in the experience of *centro-sinistra* should reserve their specific and autonomous functions in all sectors of the civil society. . . . The Socialists can participate in the government in a partial and compromising way, and at the same time remain in opposition in the civil society . . .

The note was paradoxical. Even as it assured old-line Socialists that the PSI was not about to tumble into a bourgeois bear hug, it threw the staid elements of the Italian right into a fever.

The PSI Congress was held in Rome last October in an atmosphere of tension and uncertainty. Nenni, aged but

striking, opened the session with a report at once momentous and poignant: momentous, as he said: "The extraordinary nature of this Congress is that its decisions are destined to operate immediately"; and poignant, as he recalled, "All of the possibilities wasted; all of the things that you could have done, but which, for an infinite number of reasons, you didn't do, and you replaced with the intoxicating vision of things more lovely and more radical, but impossible."

The real surprise of the Congress was the moderate, almost amiable tone of the leader of the *Sinistra*, Tullio Vecchietti. In a plain attempt at reconciliation, he denied that his faction condemned *a priori* the formula of a center-left government. He warned, however, of the danger of a "flight ahead" into a coalition which was only a cloaked tactical maneuver of the DC. He made the telling point that, without a basic theoretical differentiation from garden-variety of reformism, the party would neither strike a solid bargaining position with the Christian Democrats nor carry its mass support along with it.

Entering the debate amid great excitement, Lombardi dramatically attempted to weld the two factions together. He tried to pick up the threads of the argument from neo-capitalism—the theoretical basis of the new intransigent left—yet also to weave from them the material of government.

The transformations of the next five or ten years in Italian society will be conducted by neo-capitalism, which has the capacity to give partial answers to the immediate problems of the working class, but with the condition—and this is the point—of sacrificing its more pro-

found needs of liberty and human dignity.

Our choice rests in these terms: Either to completely abandon the process of transformation to the forces of neo-capitalism, or to *insert* the working class into the process so as to contest the developmental model of neo-capitalism.

He extended the neo-capitalism argument into foreign policy, asking that the PSI "insert" itself into NATO to "turn today's ferments to the ends of peace."

The present demands of atomic weapons do not correspond to military needs, but are substantially the expression of a neo-capitalist logic which cannot balance its economic development without the device of military spending.

The reaction of the Congress was electric, and talk of a reconciliation filled the lobbies. But Lombardi was unable to implement his speech with concrete political action that could weld the dissident factions together. The Autonomists, Lombardi's supporters included, united behind Nenni's platform and it was approved by 57% of the delegates. The *Sinistra* hardened once more, but too late to swing the party away from its decision to enter the government. After three weeks of solid bargaining, the *centro-sinistra* regime was formed. But is this a government with the power to renew a very old and ailing society? And can it justify the sacrifices the PSI has made for it?

IV

The noble experiment, the vision which Nenni fought for at great personal expense, is a patchwork of equivocations. Headed by Aldo Moro

of the Christian Democrats, an astute politician with his own problem of dissident party factions, its program and composition were negotiated, not in the high style of the forum, but in the low style of the market place. The President of the Republic, Antonio Segni, used all his influence to sabotage it, and forced Moro to assign most of the Christian Democratic portfolios to conservative parliamentarians.

For varied reasons, the country's three most prominent supporters of the concept of *centro-sinistra*—Fanfani, La Malfa and Lombardi—declined to enter the government. Its program, prefaced by a vision of justice and coming out strongly for structural economic planning, was reduced by the Christian Democrats to a series of pork-barrel compromises in individual sectors of the economy. The Socialists failed to obtain a radical plank for the sick agricultural sector. In foreign policy, the provisions, negotiated during the tragic week of Kennedy's death, are least coherent of all, leaving the country loyally paddling the Atlantic current and promising vaguely to "study" the multilateral force.

There was little to justify Nenni's dream of a "historical encounter." At best, the government represented an orientation program designed to accustom the country to a Marxist party in the antechamber of a Catholic society. For the left-wing leaders of the *PSI*, this was not enough. They denounced the party's "capitulation" and seceded to form the Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity (PSIUP), an ironic name for still another splinter. One-third of the Socialist membership followed them out.

The *PSIUP* is a new party with an old theme; proletarian unity that would eventually bring together the entire left, including the Communists, in a great movement. Its organizational problems are immense: it possesses office space only in those provinces where it was in the majority in the PSI and it is a party, at present, without any of the "normal" sources of Italian party finance.

More than anything, the *PSIUP* suffers from a lack of political breathing space. What can justify its existence in a country with a Social Democratic Party, an apparently still vital Socialist Party and the strongest Communist Party in Western Europe?

The Communists, while they judged the schism impolitic, reacted with guarded neutrality, refusing to enroll recent exiles from the PSI. If the new party tried to find political space on its left, the Communists, the real sophisticates of Italian politics, would react violently. The theoreticians of the *PSIUP* are going through a crucial period of deciding where they have

seceded to. In the meantime, they can make political hay denouncing every concession the Socialists in the government make to bourgeois reformism and to foreign policy *atlantismo*.

Wounded and reeling, the PSI is poised on the razor's edge. Nenni, ceding his secretaryship but still in control of the party, remains cloistered impotently in the Council of Ministers. Lombardi, whose vision of Socialism remains the party's great hope, is stonily silent after the failure of his attempt to integrate the party. The PSI's great danger is accepting the ripe political plums Italian politics offers to parties in power, and becoming a party of clienteles without a stubborn and precious vision of social justice. Thus, the PSI is sorely tried by its first excursion into *centro-sinistra*. "One thing leads to another," wrote Palmiro Togliatti, discussing the government's weak platform commitments. And it can be safely predicted that one of the "things" he had in mind was an increment of one million Communist votes in the next election.

THE TRIPLE REVOLUTION *continued from page 154*

signed to ensure that no citizen or resident of the United States actually starves.

We do not pretend to visualize all of the consequences of this change in our values. It is clear, however, that the distribution of abundance in a cybernated society must be based on criteria strikingly different from those of an economic system based on scarcity. In retrospect, the establishment of the right to an income will prove to have been only the first

step in the reconstruction of the value system of our society brought on by the triple revolution.

The present system encourages activities which can lead to private profit and neglects those activities which can enhance the wealth and the quality of life of our society. Consequently national policy has hitherto been aimed far more at the welfare of the productive process than at the welfare of people. The era of cybernation will reverse this emphasis. With

public policy and research concentrated on people rather than processes, we believe that those activities and interests commonly thought of as falling within the public sector will absorb the time and the commitment of many of those no longer needed to produce goods and services. Society as a whole must encourage new modes of constructive, rewarding and ennobling activity. Principal among these are activities such as teaching and learning that relate people to people rather than people to things. Education has never been primarily conducted for profit in our society; it represents the first and most obvious activity inviting the expansion of the public sector to meet the needs of the period of transition.

We are not able to predict the long-run pattern of human activity and commitment in a nation when fewer and fewer people are involved in economic production, nor are we able to forecast the overall patterns of income distribution that will replace those of the past full employment system. However, these are not speculative and fanciful matters to be contemplated at leisure for a society that may come into existence in three or four generations. The outlines of the future press sharply into the present. The problems of joblessness, inadequate incomes, and frustrated lives confront us now; the American Negro, in his rebellion, asserts the demands—and the rights—of all the disadvantaged. The Negro's is the most insistent voice today, but behind him stand the millions of impoverished who are beginning to understand that cybernation, properly

understood and used, is the road out of want and toward a decent life.

The Transition

We recognize that the drastic alterations in circumstances and in our way of life presaged by cybernation and the economy of abundance will not come about overnight. Left to the ordinary forces of the market, such change, however, will involve psychological misery and perhaps political chaos. Such misery is already clearly evident among the unemployed, among relief clients into the third generation, and more and more among the young and the old for whom society appears to hold no promise of dignified or even stable lives. We must develop programs for this transition designed to give hope to the dispossessed and those cast out by the economic system, and to provide a basis for the rallying of people to bring about those changes in political and social institutions which are essential to the age of technology.

The program here suggested is not intended to be inclusive but rather to indicate its necessary scope. We propose:

1. Massive public works. The need is to develop and put into effect programs of public works to construct dams, reservoirs, ports, water and air pollution facilities, community recreation facilities. We estimate that for each \$1 billion per year spent on public works 150,000 to 200,000 jobs would be created. \$2 billion or more a year should be spent in this way, preferably as matching funds aimed at the relief of economically distressed or dislocated areas.

2. A massive program to build up

our educational system, designed especially with the needs of the chronically under-educated in mind. We estimate that tens of thousands of employment opportunities in such areas as teaching and research and development, particularly for younger people, may be thus created. Federal programs looking to the training of an additional 100,000 teachers annually are needed.

3. A major revision of our tax structure aimed at redistributing income as well as apportioning the costs of the transition period equitably. To this end an expansion of the use of excess profits tax would be important. Subsidies and tax credit plans are required to ease the transition of many industries from manpower to machinepower.

4. A massive program of low-cost housing, to be built both publicly and privately, and aimed at a rate of 7000,000-1,000,000 units a year.

5. A public power system built on the abundance of coal in distressed areas, designed for low-cost power to heavy industrial and residential sections.

6. Rehabilitation of obsolete military bases for community or educational use.

7. Development and financing of rapid transit systems, urban and interurban; and other programs to cope with the spreading problems of the great metropolitan centers.

8. The trade unions can play an important and significant role in this period in a number of ways:

a. Use of collective bargaining to negotiate not only for people at work but also for those thrown out of work by technological change.

b. Bargaining for perquisites such as housing, recreational facilities, and similar programs as they have negotiated health and welfare programs.

c. Obtaining a voice in the investment of the unions' huge pension and welfare funds, and insisting on investment policies which have as their major criteria the social use and function of the enterprises in which the investment is made.

d. Organization of the unemployed so that these voiceless people may once more be given a voice in their own economic destinies.

9. The use of the licensing power of government to regulate the speed and direction of cybernation to minimize hardship; and the use of minimum wage power as well as taxing powers to provide the incentives for moving as rapidly as possible toward the goals indicated by this paper....

Change Must Be Managed

The historic discovery of the post-World War II years is that the economic destiny of the nation can be managed. Since the debate over the Employment Act of 1946, it has been increasingly understood that the federal Government bears primary responsibility for the economic and social well-being of the country. The essence of management is planning. The democratic requirement is planning by public bodies for the general welfare. Planning by private bodies such as corporations for their own welfare does not automatically result in additions to the general welfare, as the impact of cybernation on jobs has already made clear.

The hardships imposed by sudden changes in technology have been ac-

knowledgeed by Congress in proposals for dealing with the long- and short-run "dislocations" in legislation for depressed and "impacted" areas, retraining of workers replaced by machines, and the like. The measures so far proposed have not been "transitional" in conception. Perhaps for this reason they have had little effect on the situations they were designed to alleviate. But the primary weakness of this legislation is not ineffectiveness but incoherence. In no way can these disconnected measures be seen as a plan for remedying deep ailments but only, so to speak, as the superficial treatment of surface wounds.

Planning agencies should constitute the network through which pass the stated needs of the people at every level of society, gradually building into a national inventory of human requirements, arrived at by democratic debate of elected representatives.

The primary tasks of the appropriate institutions should be:

- to collect the data necessary to appraise the effects, social and economic, of cybernation at all conceivable rates of innovation;

- to recommend ways, by public and private initiative, of encouraging and stimulating cybernation;

- to determine the optimum allocation of human and natural resources in meeting the requirements of society;

- to develop ways to smooth the transition from a society in which the norm is full employment within the productive system to

one in which the norm will be non-employment, in the traditional sense of productive work; to bring about the conditions in which men and women no longer needed to produce goods and services may find their way to a variety of self-fulfilling occupations that are a consequence of the era of abundance;

- to work out alternatives to defense and related spending that will commend themselves to citizens, corporations and unions as a more reasonable use of common resources.

- to integrate domestic and international planning. The technological revolution has related virtually every major domestic problem to a world problem. The vast inequities between the industrialized and the underdeveloped countries cannot long be sustained.

The aim throughout will be the conscious and rational direction of economic life by planning institutions under democratic control.

Robert Theobald: One of the worst stories I've ever heard was about one of the automobile companies where if a person dies while the assembly line is operating and he is in a place where he can't be got at, he lies there until the line breaks down . . .

Ralph Helstein: . . . until it comes to a normal stop.

—From "A Conversation on Jobs, Machines, and People," Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions.

BOOKS

A Guide to Economic Thinking

MAIN CURRENTS IN MODERN ECONOMICS: ECONOMIC THOUGHT SINCE 1870, by Ben B. Seligman. New York: The Free Press. 1962. 887 pp., \$11.75.

Unemployment, automation, poverty, the gold drain, taxation policy have pushed economics back to center stage in American social thought. A growing realization of the deficiencies of our economy forces us to try to understand this complicated machinery which generates a fantastic outpouring of goods and services but cannot employ our growing labor force nor move towards economic justice.

Ben Seligman, the distinguished director of research for the Retail Clerks International Union and a veteran contributor to *DISSENT*, has provided a comprehensive guide to the understanding of economic thinking. His history of economic thought is urbane and lucid, accessible to the general reader; it has a viewpoint; it not only compactly summarizes the ideas of leading economists but places them in context, links them to others and critically assesses their work.

The book is divided into three parts, in each of which there is a chronological development. Part I, "The Revolt Against Formalism," begins in the 1870's "with the revolt of the German historical writers against the

seeming rigidity of classical doctrine." The analysis of the protests of the historicists — Schmoller, Sombart, Weber, Tawney and others—is followed by a study of the socialist attack, which provides a rich account of Marxian and post-Marxian writings up to the present. The concluding section deals with the American institutional writers like Veblen, Mitchell, Clark, Commons and Galbraith. The treatment of Commons is especially good and may help rescue his work from its unfortunate oblivion.

Part II, "The Reaffirmation of Tradition," begins with the presentation of marginal utility analysis as developed by Jevons, the Austrian economists and John Bates Clark. Seligman traces one strain of evolution of these ideas into the present-day libertarianism of von Mises and Hayek. Walras, Pareto, Hicks, Samuelson and Leontief are brought together in a chapter on "Equilibrium Economics and the Unification of Theory." The final chapter brings together English economists who reaffirmed the classical tradition: Wicksteed, Marshall, Pigou, Robertson, Hawtrey, Robbins and

Shackle. Welfare economics, monetary issues and the contemporary analysis of expectations are covered.

Part III, "The Thrust Toward Technique," begins with the great Swedish economists—Cassell, Davidson, Ohlin, Lundberg, Myrdal—who tried to relate theory to practice. Pure theory became an important trend in American thought and is discussed in the work of Irving Fisher, Frank Knight and Milton Friedman among others. The final chapter of this part, "From Realism to Technique," covers the work of Schumpeter, monopolistic competition (Sraffa, Robinson, Chamberlin), Keynes and neo-Keynesians concerned with growth, and recent developments in game theory and linear programming.

In his candid foreword, Seligman asserts that his background is that of an institutionalist and that he has "never been overly sympathetic with efforts to make economics a matter of purely analytical technique." While technical competence is important for effective economic reasoning, "the profession has bogged itself down in technical refinements and, in the main, has failed to go beyond them."

The fascination with new mathematical tools has largely overwhelmed theoretical concerns with policy and the development of theory pertinent to policy. At best, tired Keynesianism is reflexively trotted out to mitigate difficulties. Few economists are appraising the implications of the changing structure and operation of the economy. Short-run problems are the almost exclusive focus in domestic analysis. Old wine is poured into old bottles.

Seligman wishes to redirect eco-

nomics to its original focus of a political economy. He sees economics as "primarily a social science, a study of human action in a complex environment." His choice of the Parringtonian title is no accident. Economics should be "a study of the relationships between men: the overwhelming stress on the man-goods and goods-goods relationships may have provided the foundation for the development of certain kinds of technical analysis, but it fails to tell us much about the economic manifestations of social behavior."

Any organization of material to cover 100 years cannot satisfy every reader. I think that if Seligman had

PANORAMAS

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SUMARIO

QUE ES HOY, LA DEMOCRACIA? *Bertrand Russell*: Libertad, democracia y economía. *Stafford Cripps*: Democracia y Estado. *Reinhold Niebuhr*: Difícil y necesaria.

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Halldór Sigurdsson: Las casas blancas. **AGUJA DE MAREAR**: Le autodeterminación—La pena de muerte—Recordatorio—Cómo nos ven—Homo sapiens—In memoriam—Fichas—Biblioteca.

UN MANUAL DE EDUCACION CIVICA: Atlas del mundo actual.

Director: VÍCTOR ALBA

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permitted himself greater space to express his own viewpoint, the reader would see more sharply the argument that he presents about the course of economic thought. In restricting himself largely to economic *writers* rather than to economic thought, he has not given a full enough account of his

interpretation of the thrust of economics in the years he has covered.

Main Currents is a distinguished contribution, which packs almost 100 years of economic thought into an arsenal for those who want to think seriously about where we are drifting.

S. M. MILLER

Of Labor and Its Friends

THE STATE OF THE UNIONS, by Paul Jacobs. New York: Atheneum, 1963. xiii+303 pp. \$5.

LABOR TODAY: the Triumphs and Failures of Unionism in the United States, by B. J. Widick. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1964. xi+238 pp. \$3.75.

AMERICA COMES OF MIDDLE AGE, by Murray Kempton. Boston: Little, Brown, 1963. xiv+385 pp. \$6.50.

THE RANK-AND-FILE LEADER, by Sidney M. Peck; foreword by Eugene V. Schneider. New Haven: College and University Press, 1963. 398 pp. \$6.

The four books here discussed share the quality of being animated by a genuine concern for the factory hand, the victim of corporate, union, or political bureaucracy. That is to say, three of them are animated. Mr. Peck's book may more properly be said to exist.

Not that it is lacking in information, or sympathy for its subject: the union shop steward. The patient reader will be rewarded with interesting, if hardly novel, facts about stresses and strains imposed on the shop steward as rank-and-file leader, as buffer between union officialdom and management. But how far can the reader's patience be taxed! Mr. Peck is abso-

lutely goggle-eyed about his "techniques" (the jacket blurb tells you right off they are "revolutionary"; maybe, but that would simply prove that some revolutions do not cut much ice). So much space is devoted to tedious elaborations of methodology—the group interview technique, the selection of shops to study, the sound-recorded group interview—that it becomes very difficult to see the information for the methods used to acquire it.

This much is to Mr. Peck's credit: he did not rely on written sources; summers he worked in different factories. (And the participant observer technique is not that unusual,

even among sociologists.) It may be commendable as a dissertation, but a dissertation is not yet a book. Praiseworthy as his summer employment was, I have an idea that if he had talked to shop stewards in all kinds of shops and situations his contribution might have been easier to assess. I suspect that interviewing Jack Widick and other shop stewards, present and ex-, might have produced a more illuminating study. At any rate: Recommended for doctoral candidates in industrial sociology, labor studies, and associated disciplines (at the very least it is handy footnote material); others will read it at their own peril, but with some profit.

It is unfair to turn from Mr. Peck to a journalist at the top of his craft. Murray Kempton is just that, and the columns collected in his new volume were culled from what was the best newspaper column in New York City while it lasted. Collections are frequently painful things; they tend to lack an inner unity of theme, spirit, and skill. Kempton's columns, however, are remarkably readable. If here and there the prose is gluey and overexposed, it is more frequently incisive, compassionate, caustic.

The columns here collected were written by a working newspaperman, and they are best when Kempton is reporting a story. The section called "Among School Children," including stories datelined Sumner, Mississippi; Nashville, Tennessee; Little Rock, Arkansas; etc., is alone worth the price of the work. I thought they were great when I first read them; I still think so.

Kempton cannot resist the temptation to finish off his characters. Jimmy

Hoffa and Richard Nixon are always being counted out, and bouncing back. Now and then Kempton strains for effect in a column, and quite often a sentence creaks under the effort to sparkle with paradox and punch. (And there's nothing I suppose that will really prevent political or labor columnists from making like they're working the press box at a ball game). But taken in sum, *America Comes of Middle Age* is a collection I'll be glad to keep. It is a reminder that New York City has lost a top-notch newspaperman.

The Jack (or B. J.) Widick I referred to above has written a swift-stepping, overview of the labor unions today. He makes excellent use of his own experience as assembly line worker (and not on summer holiday either), union activist in auto (and before that in rubber), labor journalist, and professional in labor studies at Wayne State and Columbia University. He uses sources wisely, and displays good judgment in the use (excessive use?) of citations.

Labor Today is a useful work if, I think, ultimately a wrongheaded one. Parts of it are first-rate, as "Detroit—the Day the Job Stopped," which originally appeared in *The Nation*. (It is not a collection, but incorporates pieces Widick had previously written.) Where it comes unstuck is in the very passion of its concern over the vanishing vitality of the union movement. In the end, there is more attention to the "failures" of unionism, than its "triumphs." As a man who has devoted his life to a dedicated vision of the union's responsibilities and opportunities, B. J. Widick unfortunately loses his

sense of balance in confronting its disappointments and realities. It is hard to accept as reasoned judgment, for example, his repeated assertion that George Meany is not a labor leader. Whether Meany is a good or bad labor leader is one discussion; but that he is not a labor leader at all? That impresses me as silly. Admitted, Meany has never been on a picket line, never led a strike, and boasts of both "achievements," but he does head the most powerful labor federation in the world, and knows the business of running a union—which is not quite the same thing as, if in practice it is close to, business unionism. There is enough cause to critically scrutinize Meany's role, and enough reason to take him apart for his record on civil rights among other issues, without clouding the total picture.

More distressing is Widick's treatment of Reuther. Years ago, Widick collaborated with Irving Howe in writing *The UAW and Walter Reuther*. He would have done well to let his assessment of Reuther rest with the conclusions and criticism contained in that book which are not at all in conflict with updating the information on Reuther's progress or his decline. That, however, is not the same thing as counting Reuther out; which is what Widick does. Granted Reuther has not measured up to all we, and the auto workers perhaps, expected of him. He nevertheless remains a highly complex individual, with extraordinary ability and sensitivity (call it ambition, if you will). His stature does decline against the measure of what he might have been. But who is to say he might not still "be"? Whether conservative Mortimer

Snerds glug at mere mention of his name had as little moment when Reuther was their *bete noir* as today when he has been swallowed by a society able to absorb everything.

There is more involved here than whether Reuther is or is not a has-been. The point is better made in consideration of Paul Jacobs' book which, for very good reason, has been debated as one of the most important labor books in years. It is a collection, with all the frailties of assembling reportorial pieces written over a period of years, but with the virtue of having been done well. The Hoffa articles, which open the book, are dated by the latest developments. However, they remain illuminating, continually useful in any final appraisal of Hoffa. The ILGWU pieces do not come off so well, understandable in view of the difficulties he reports in trying to discuss the situation with union officials.

The heart of the book is in its last chapter which is part of a report he made as director of a trade union study sponsored by the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions. The essence of this report, "Old Before Its Time," is given as follows in an introductory statement:

. . . collective bargaining cannot operate successfully in coping with the growing problems created by automation and unemployment; that government intervention into collective bargaining will increase more and more; and that unions are faced with a major internal crisis growing from their failure to understand the nature of the Negro demand for job equality.

As statements of fact, all of these points seem to be established by the

evidence. Traditional methods *are* inadequate in meeting new problems (but what about the *traditional* problems which continue to exist in abundance!). The government gives every sign of intervening more and more (witness the President's recent statements), and the unions are in truth not facing up to the Negro challenge. In context, the sense is conveyed that none of this can be resisted or changed—and this, I think, has not been demonstrated.

My mother used to say that the trouble with the bride is she's too pretty. Similarly, both Jacobs and Widick are the victims of their own good intentions. Since I know both of them, I think I can testify to what is not altogether plain in their books: they would like to see a vigorous labor movement, democratic, viably confronting new problems, extending the hand of fraternity to the Negro worker. Their zeal is betrayed by the realities of business unionism, jurisdictional quarrels, bureaucratism, traditionalism, segregation. What they fail to take into adequate account are the pressures that cannot be contained by unimaginative porkchoppers squatting on their life-time sinecures.

Nor is it at all certain that the Reuthers, or even the Meanys, will utterly fail in respect to all of these problems. In any case, we are not beyond being able to influence the situation—I speak of myself, Paul, Jack. But suppose we do write ourselves off, and, far more important in terms of power and position, Reuther, Mazey, Hoffa, and all the present crop of union leaders, good and bad. That neither begins nor ends the matter.

(Interesting that Kempton and Jacobs, sharp as they are about Hoffa, display a reluctant admiration for Hoffa; he gets things done, if in the wrong way and for the wrong reasons. Which does, however, say that things can be done—given, let us say, a better purpose and, obviously, a better way.)

The unions have “failed to understand the nature of the Negro demand for job equality.” No question about that. But as the civil rights movement develops, *and faces its own dilemmas*, won't it exercise compulsions on the union movement, and not only for jobs? Dubinsky is not really the essence of the matter! And Herbert Hill and Paul Jacobs are as likely to have the last word as Gus Tyler. It remains to be seen if the civil rights department of the AFL-CIO will make significant progress in eradicating entrenched discriminatory union policies; there is some small evidence of improvement. What may really count for more in the end are the signs that important elements of the civil rights movement, and not only Randolph, are mounting pressures on the unions for *involvement*. They are beginning to envision a future *in* the unions as an integral part of *their* future. It is not merely a question of compelling the sheet-metal workers to admit Negroes. It is rather a question of advancing the Negro's cause by advancing the union's as well.

Pollyanish? Could be. However, anxiety need not encourage despair; it can stimulate investigation. And this much can be said: Paul Jacobs may have accomplished just that.

EMANUEL GELTMAN

Human Document

Dix-Sept Ans les Camps Sovietiques, by Andree Sentaurens.
Paris: Gallimard, 1963. 387 pp. F. 16.

This detailed account, by a French woman who spent seventeen years in Russian concentration camps and was finally released in 1956, ought soon to be translated. The picture of the horror of these camps, and especially the sketches of the life histories of more

than a hundred women with whom the author shared her fate, are unforgettable. This is not a political book, the author knows little and cares less about politics. But it is a human document of the first order.

L. C.

The Use and Misuse of Land

THE QUIET CRISIS, by Stewart L. Udall. Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

GOD'S OWN JUNKYARD: THE PLANNED DETERIORATION OF AMERICA'S LANDSCAPE, by Peter Blake. Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Stewart Udall's book is a brief, sobering history of land use in this country. Americans have rarely treated the land with care and intelligence, much less that Indian "reverence" Udall reminds us of. National expansionism has meant reckless overgrazing and the crudest destruction of forests and wildlife. Land management and preservation came slowly and against the opposition of the many Congressmen Teddy Roosevelt outmaneuvered in his years as White House conservationist. Even the establishment of the Forest Service and national park system could amount only to a holding action for those many areas which had been ransacked for what they were

worth and abandoned, their esthetic value and productive capacity alike permanently impaired.

On all this Udall is very good. His opening chapters are embellished with superb color photographs of the untouched land, and the subsequent historical account is lucid and succinct. Real indignation seeps through the elegant prose: "Entwined with the tragedy of the buffalo was the tragedy of human blindness that depicted the national mood. Only a handful of men spoke up to protest the slaughter, and, worse, the trustee of the people, President Ulysses S. Grant, cast his lot with waste and butchery." Or later: "[the nineteenth-century lumber ty-

coons] set world records for waste, and their prodigal prosperity consumed the stored 'capital' of nature—which, by right, belonged to other generations."

In dealing with the present, however, Udall is less forceful and precise, and as he nears contemporary political issues he becomes predictably evasive. The chapter "Conservation and the Future" makes all the right points, but in a vague and wistful fashion. Udall is in favor of intelligent land management, yes, and he hopes the population will stop growing while there remains space to walk around in. He pleads with everybody—especially the powerful—to espouse the conservation cause and place a premium on beauty. "Enlightened leaders of the business community are already pointing the way," he reports optimistically; "such companies as Lever Brother's, Johnson's Wax and the Connecticut General Life Insurance Company have demonstrated that a beautifully designed building is the most attractive form of advertising." (We are not told how Pan American has reacted to this happy news.)

Midway Udall describes the personal debate between Gifford Pinchot, who was willing to compromise in the struggle to preserve wilderness land, and John Muir, who was not. In his remarks on Hetch Hetchy, the beautiful California valley which was inundated to give San Francisco a cheap water supply, Udall seems to emerge as a Muir sympathizer; but he never really grapples with the vexing problem of multiple use of forest land, and his treatment of current wilderness affairs is confined to a single wish-

ful paragraph. Nowhere does he hint that the wilderness system he advocates is embodied in a bill now before Congress. Such an omission is understandable: Udall does not want to make his book a political program or to offend those representatives in whose hands the bill rests. Yet it still seems a pity that his sharpest attacks are reserved for legislators and executives safely in the past.

Exemplifying the difficulties of current conservation programs, the Wilderness Bill, designed to give legislative protection to federal lands now administered as wilderness, has had a rocky time in Congress. Introduced in the fifties, its Senate passage by seventy votes in 1961 was hopeful but nothing more; it was killed in a House Committee whose chairman, Wayne Aspinall of Colorado, is its adamant foe. The present Congress threatens to repeat; at the end of the first session the Senate bill was once more boxed in Aspinall's committee.

The issue is clear enough, really, though Aspinall and others have tried to obscure it in pseudo-Constitutional haze: are we to preserve some virgin land as wilderness, or are we to subject it all to "multiple use" (the current euphemism for commercial exploitation)? The bill's opponents pay lip service to its general intentions while attempting to amend it out of useful existence. They have nothing against wilderness, of course, just so long as they can continue to mine, graze cattle and cut down trees. One mining geologist promised "restoration as near as practicable of the land disturbed," but as Representative John Saylor replied, "The mining industry has not been noted for its going in

and attempting to restore anything." If we open public wilderness lands to the kind of competitive commercializing our economy fosters, we should not expect them to remain very attractive. Udall is well aware of the perilous state of the wilderness, but he does not probe current manifestations of that peril.

Whatever its shortcomings, *The Quiet Crisis* is a moving book; as the work of a Secretary of the Interior it is an encouraging sign of administrative concern over the blight and decay which spread around us daily.

God's Own Junkyard, by Peter Blake, is a useful companion to the Udall book. Where Udall is panoramic and impersonal, Blake is abrupt and hortatory. His is frankly an exercise in muckraking, a crusade against "the wholesale destruction of our countryside." The book consists mainly of photographs (good ones). Anyone who

has lived long in this country and especially in California can compile his private scrapbook of scenic disasters, but Blake does a service by providing a nationwide collection. The pictures form an admirable commentary: Park Avenue before and after the Pan-Am Building. A spaghetti of highways in Detroit. An untouched Sierra landscape. Endless duplicate California homes.

Much of Blake's attention is devoted to urban areas, which *The Quiet Crisis* largely ignores. In his brief introduction Blake contends with some heat and uncomfortable accuracy that "just about the *only* factor that determines the shape of the American city is unregulated private profit." The book is often shrill, but it contains more than enough truth to make the landscape of the future seem the most contemporary of concerns.

STEVEN A. JERVIS

A Window on Negro Intellectuals

SOON, ONE MORNING. New Writing by American Negroes, 1940-1962. Edited by Herbert Hill. Alfred A. Knopf. 617 pp. \$6.95.

This collection should not be thought of as inclusive: one will search in vain for such novelists as Mark Kennedy, Julian Mayfield, William Kelley; or such journalists as Gordon Parks and Carl Rowan. Nor should it be regarded simply as a "literary" anthology. For once, the dust jacket copy

hits it on the nose when it characterizes this book as one which "opens a window on the world of the Negro intellectual in the United States today."

In consequence, the curious will find here, in addition to a sheaf of poems (some very good, some quite bad) and fiction (ditto) by more or less familiar

hands, the reflections of sociologists, lawyers, historians, playwrights, journalists, choreographers, on such matters as racism in scholarship and racialism in poetry, growing up in the South and coming of age in the Midwest, literature in politics and politics in literature.

For unexplained reasons Herbert Hill of the NAACP, who contributes a helpful introduction, has chosen to group under the fiction category the memoirs of Pauli Murray, who in an excerpt from *Proud Shoes*, tells the extraordinarily moving story of her white great-grandfather and Negro great-grandmother; of Ted Poston, who recounts most wittily how his elders handled "The Birth of a Nation" when it came to Hopkinsville, Kentucky; and of Katherine Dunham, who turns to the third person in "The Creek" (taken from her autobiography, *A Touch of Innocence*) to describe with compassion and power her lonely father's sexual yearning for his confused adolescent daughter.

These selections alone would make the book worthwhile. But there are also a most revealing account of a visit with Sinclair Lewis by Horace R. Cayton, a first-rate discussion of "negritude" by St. Clair Drake, a funny reminiscence of a group of young

Negroes adrift in Russia during the depression by Langston Hughes, and some touching descriptions of Negroes adrift in Paris from the late Richard Wright's unfinished novel, in which that fine writer's tragic force still flickers.

There are, too, a group of letters written by James Baldwin to his agent from such places as Israel and Turkey, in which the most celebrated Negro writer of our day discloses—perhaps more than he himself realizes—how his notion of himself has altered, and how even the most self-aware Negro writer in his position can no longer be simply an essayist, but must become willy-nilly a public figure. Although at one time they were presumably personal communications, in print they are suffused with a public portentousness which approaches, dare one add?, pomposity. There is more unintended pathos in this than in a dozen pieces of high-minded fiction.

Altogether not merely a readable but a valuable book. And since nothing else available is nearly as comprehensive, it is going to have to be consulted by anyone seriously concerned with cultural developments among American Negroes in the 1960's, the most crucial decade since Emancipation.

HARVEY SWADOS

A SPECIAL REPORT

Jeremy Lerner

THE NEW YORK SCHOOL CRISIS

I. The Circumstances

UFT Official: Why is it we can get young people to volunteer for the Peace Corps to teach in Ghana, yet we can't get them to teach in public schools in Harlem? Answer: Because in Ghana, there's hope.

Let me start with some statistics. There are 132 elementary schools and 31 junior high schools in New York City whose students are almost entirely (over 90% in the elementary schools; over 85% in the junior highs) Negro and Puerto Rican. In the past six years, while Negro and Puerto Rican enrollment has gone up 53%, white enrollment has fallen 8%, and the number of predominantly Negro and Puerto Rican schools has doubled. Of New York's one million schoolchildren, roughly 40% are Negro and Puerto Rican, 60% "other." Efforts of the Board of Education in the past six years to eliminate blatant gerrymandering and allow some voluntary transfers have reduced by a third the number of schools where Negroes and Puerto Ricans are less than 10% of enrollment. But the problem gets more difficult all the time, as is indicated by the fact that 52%—an outright majority—of the city's 1st graders are Negro or Puerto Rican.

The increase in segregated schools is due to three factors. First, rural minority groups are moving into the city and middle-class urban whites are heading for the suburbs. Second, discrimination, economic pressures, and lack of effective planning confine the newcomers to ghettos. Third, cautious whites send their children to private or parochial schools rather than "risk" a neighborhood school where minorities predominate. Over 450,000 New York children attend private or parochial schools, a figure that would represent a staggering percentage even for an exclusive suburb.

Thus New York City suffers from an educational problem which it has come to describe as *de facto* segregation. The Board of Education says the facts are essentially beyond its control; the civil rights groups say they are the facts of a racist society, and must in all justice be eliminated by whatever means possible.

Segregation in ghetto schools is more than racial; there is segregation by economic class as well. Wherever Negro parents reach the middle class, at least some of them send their kids to private schools. Lower-class Negro kids find themselves isolated in schools which are understaffed, underequipped, overcrowded, demoralized, and conspicuously lacking in the mixture of cultural backgrounds which can make life in New York such an educational experience. Many of them are children of parents who are in effect first-generation immigrants from southern and rural areas; for of New York's 1,100,000 Negroes, 340,000 have arrived in the last ten years, 630,000 in the last twenty years. Most of the 600,000 Puerto Ricans have come in the past decade, while the white population has dwindled by 500,000.

Teaching middle-class children the ins and outs of a culture made for them is obviously easier than struggling with ghetto children, most of whom are members of a racial group which has never been allowed to recover from the effects of slavery. Some minority schools have annual teacher turnover rates of over 60%. Some teachers flatly refuse to take assignments in such schools; others drop out as the school year proceeds. Not only is one out of every two teachers a substitute, but some classes may stay without a regularly assigned teacher all year, defeating one temporary substitute after another. One can see that the atmosphere in minority schools is hardly conducive to learning. It is estimated that 85% of the 8th-grade students in Harlem are "functional illiterates," which means that their reading is not above 5th-grade level—in many cases it is much below.

Though some authorities, e.g. Kenneth Clark, disagree, it is hard to believe that the social conditions under which most New York Negroes live are not responsible for some of the difficulty. According to the Harlem Youth survey, whose figures many observers regard as conservative, only one-half of Harlem children under 18 are living with both parents, more than one-quarter of Harlem youth receives welfare assistance, and the rate of narcotics addiction in the area is ten times that for the rest of the city.

By the time they reach junior high school, ghetto children are well aware of their social situation, and it does not exactly give them a feeling of unlimited possibilities. Let me quote from two batches of

essays which were gathered at different Harlem elementary schools from a 6th-grade class of "slow" readers (S) and a 6th-grade class of "fast" readers (F). I think the language shows as much about the children—their educational retardation and yet their straightforwardness and toughness—as about the conditions they describe.

6th-grade boy (F): This story is about a boy namely me, who lives in a apartment in and around the slum area. I feel that other people should be interested in what I have to say and just like me, *try* to do something about it, either by literal or diatribe means. This book is only to be read by men and women boys and girls who feel deeply serious about segregation and feel that this is no joke.

6th-grade girl (S): I am not satisfeyed with the dope addictees around our block. They take dope in our hallway every night. Another is they break in stores and bars. I am desatified with the lady that live under us. she set fire to Doris's door. Some dope backs live under us. The lady under us robbed Teddy's aunt for \$17.00's. One night a dope addict went cazey in our hally way. They are so many bums in our block. Please help to get and keep them out.

6th-grade girl (S): I don't like people going around youing bad Lanugwsh around litter Kide a bearking in Store and fighting and youing dop. And Killing people. And drunk in hallwall. They should stop drink They are teacher the Kide how to Steel I see it alot of tim but I dont pay it no mind I am surrounded by them.

6th-grade boy (S): Im not happy about the people who dink. wiskey and go to sleep And I not happy about the peole who come in my hall-way and go up stairs and take a neals and. stick there themself in the arm. I not happy about the people who buy wine and wiskey and broke the bottle in the hallway

6th-grade girl (S): the be out there in the hall taking dope and I be freighnten.

6th-grade boy (S): I deslike the peple being hit by cars, the car crashes, peple fighting, the peple jumping of roofes, stelling paper from the stores, peple picking pocketes, the peple with out thir cubs on dogs and stop peple from taking dop in this naborhood.

6th-grade girl (F): (True) *What a Block!* (true)

My block is the most terrible block I've ever seen. There are at lease 25 or 30 narcartic people in my block. The cops come around there and tries to act bad but I bet inside of them they are as scared as can be. They even had in the papers that this block is the worst block, not in Manhattan but in New York City. In the summer they don't do nothing except shooting, stabling, and fighting. They hang all over the stoops and when you say excuse me to them they hear you but they just don't feel like moving. Some times they make me so mad that I feel like slaping them and stuffing bag of garbage down their throats.

The fact that these kids have been encouraged to describe their surroundings is the first sign of hope that they will be able to change them. The school should represent that possibility; it should be a fortress of security in which the children are respected, accepted and developed. Otherwise they are surrounded, as the little girl says; drug addiction, for example, will begin to appear in their ranks while they are still in junior high school—and addiction is only the most dramatic form of withdrawal and defeat.

Looking around him, the young Negro boy will find few “father figures” to imitate; for the men of his world have not been accorded the honorable work men need to earn self-respect. Bitter, confused, withdrawn, violent against one another, lower-class Negro men do not usually last long with their women. The families are matriarchal, the children remaining with their mothers while a succession of “uncles” come and go. There is small hope of that masculine self-respect which is the traditional basis of family pride. The little boy is regarded as inferior to the little girl, and has less chance of survival—by which I mean simply less chance of getting through life without cracking up, without sliding into some form of self-obliteration.

Dismal to tell, the schools in many ways duplicate the situation of the homes. The classroom confronts the child with the same old arrangement: a woman with too many kids. Far too few of the elementary schoolteachers are men, let alone Negro men. The size of classes, usually around 30 pupils per class, makes individual attention—and thus the development of positive identity and incentive—as unlikely at school as it is at home.

When lower-class Negro children enter elementary school, they are already “behind” in several important respects. In crowded tenement apartments children are in the way from the moment they are born. While the adults of the matriarchal clan unit work or wander, children are brought up by older children, who have reasons of their own to feel impatient or harassed. According to the teacher whose “fast” 6th-grade pupils I quoted above,

. . . middle-class Negro kids need integration. But what the lower-class kids need right now is that somehow we conquer the chaos they live in. They have no stability whatever—no family, no home, no one to talk with them. They live in a world without space or time. I mean that literally. Even by the time these kids reach the 6th grade, most of them can't tell time. You can't talk to them about the future—say, about jobs—because they won't know what you're talking about. And when you refer to concepts of space, why you can't talk about “somewhere else,”

tell how far away another city is, how long a river is, or simple facts of geography. Though they're fantastically sophisticated, more sophisticated than maybe they ought to be, about how adults behave, their mental orientation is almost utterly without abstract concepts. Look: they don't even know who pays the welfare! They don't even know what checks are!

Of course this particular teacher will get his kids talking and thinking about time and space and jobs and where the money comes from. But there aren't enough like him, and one year of a good teacher can dispel the chaos for very few. The class he has taken such pains with finds itself a year later without an assigned teacher, and the boy who last year wrote a brilliant autobiography is in danger this year of flunking at junior high, breaking down, and spending his high school years in and out of institutions.

Why don't teachers make more progress with these children? Because they are woefully short of books and materials, especially good readers based on the facts of urban life. Because they have to spend so much time on discipline.* Because they get poor support from their principals and from the rest of the top-heavy school bureaucracy. But the truth is that most of New York's teachers are too middle-class, too insensitive or too fragile to teach ghetto children successfully. Not that they are worse than teachers in other places, they are simply less suited to their jobs. Not all of them are bothered by their failure; some stay in slum schools because apparently it gives them a sense of security to blame the kids for what they fail to teach them. Others, with the best will in the world, are baffled by children who literally speak a different language. One young white teacher, extremely hard-working and perhaps more honest than most, told me after a grueling day,

I hate these kids. They're impossible. How did they get this way? I never thought I'd become so authoritarian.

Most of the teachers are conscientious: that's one of the hallmarks of the professional person. But the manner in which teachers are trained and chosen—which I will discuss below—is practically guaranteed to eliminate those possessing the imagination and flexibility to get through to slum children.

As for the curriculum, it is hopelessly inappropriate. The readers still current in practically every school are those insipid productions featuring Sally, Dick and Jane, the golden-haired cardboard tots from Steril-

* Discipline as opposed to socialization. The 6th-grade teacher quoted above reports that with a "slow" class he begins with checkers, and that it takes weeks to get the children to play together without turning over the board and having at each other. Then he brings out the readers.

ityville. One could go on by describing a series of tests and achievement-levels, but tests and levels are irrelevant to children who mostly do not pass or reach them. Let me quote Martin Mayer (from his book, *The Schools*) on what our young tenement-dwellers are supposed to be learning by the time they get to high school:

In New York . . . the major Theme Center for tenth-grade "Language Arts" is "Learning to Live with the Family." . . . The curriculum guide suggests "round-table, panel, and forum discussions" on "questions relating to allowances, dating, working after school, selecting and entertaining friends, choosing a career, minding younger brothers and sisters, helping with household chores, contributing earnings to the family, decorating one's own room, choosing family vacation places, using the family car."

But what difference does high school make? The battle is lost long before then. Perhaps it's already lost by the time 1st graders move to the 2nd grade, when only 10% of them are on reading level.

Yet, when all is said and done, are not these conditions surmountable by individual effort? Is it not possible for the majority of these youngsters to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps, as so many of their 2nd-generation American teachers say that they or their parents did? Or is this problem unique somehow, does it have to do with the unprecedented oppression and separation of a group that has never in the history of this country been free? Is it really true, as the 1954 Supreme Court decision contends, that "Segregation of white and colored children in public schools has a detrimental effect upon the colored children. . . . A sense of inferiority affects the motivation of the child to learn"?

In the opinion of this observer, no one could sit for long in Harlem classes without seeing overwhelming evidence of the demoralizing effects of segregation. These children are treated as inferior, just as their parents and grandparents and great-grandparents were—and there is no sense of any possibility that such treatment is ending! In the classroom of a 1st-grade teacher who was a militant supporter of the boycott, I was surprised to find cut-out pictures of white children used almost exclusively as bulletin board illustrations. Later I found the purified faces of Sally, Dick and Jane beaming out at me in ghetto classrooms of teachers Negro or white, liberal or not: as if to say, these are what good children are like.

5th-grade Lower East Side boy (F): I have a problem that I am colored. I would like to be handsome but I cant because other people have strait blond hair and they are handsome.

In a 2nd-grade Harlem classroom the teacher, a lively, intelligent Negro woman, has her kids acting out a nursery tale. In front of the class stands a shy, finger-sucking little girl, her hair in pigtails, absolutely adorable and black. From her neck hangs a large square of cardboard, on which an adult has painted the head of a white girl with abundantly flowing golden hair. Caption: "GOLDILOCKS."

In another 2nd-grade classroom, where well cared-for Negro children are industriously and quietly working under the direction of a Negro teacher, I glance up and see a row of self-portraits above the front blackboard. I count: of 23 portraits, 1 red, 1 green, only 2 brown, and 19 white as the paper they're drawn on.

The sense of inferiority runs deeper than skin-deep. I remember a junior-high-school social-studies teacher trying to discuss the school boycott with his 9th-grade "slow" pupils. Most of them are long since lost; they look as though they have drawn curtains across the inside of their eyeballs. It develops that they do not know the words "boycott" or "civil rights," and to them "discrimination" is something that happens down South. And oh the tortured embarrassment with which they answer questions! From beneath the embarrassment there slinks a kind of arrogance, thriving it seems on the mere fact that the teacher is trying to teach them—as if to say, imagine this fool, asking *me* a question! Whereupon they laugh. They have to. And we are all relieved.

Whether they know the word "discrimination" or not, these kids know they are not worth much to the world they live in. Some of them, all too many, are not worth much to themselves, and lash out in self-hating violence at the nearest target, usually someone who reminds them of themselves. Already the white people of America are beginning to dread the day when these children, as some day they surely must, will recognize their real enemies. As they are at last beginning to . . .

West Harlem 6th-grade boy (F): Teacher! In the caveman days, if there were Negro cavemen, did the white cavemen use them as slaves?

II. *The Frying Pan*

Almost never has the New York Board of Education voluntarily taken steps for greater integration. The highly-touted Open Enrollment program was initiated in the fall of 1960 only after neighborhood school strikes and the threat of further strikes led by Rev. Milton Galamison and Paul Zuber. Open Enrollment is a voluntary transfer program designed ostensibly to relieve overcrowding as well as to integrate. In Open Enrollment overcrowded schools (mostly minority schools) are designated as "sending schools, whose pupils may apply—on an individual basis—for transfer to "receiving" schools in other neighborhoods. The re-

sponsibility is on the parents of each child, and the response to Open Enrollment has indicated no desire on the part of ghetto Negroes to rush their children to schools in "better" neighborhoods. To date Open Enrollment busses at city expense only 15,000 children each day. Surely, many of these are middle-class Negroes . . . and whites. A teacher on the Lower East Side whose school is over 95% Negro and Puerto Rican reports that the only ones who left her school in Open Enrollment were ten of the remaining white kids, who bussed daily all the way to Queens.

Even since the 1954 Supreme Court decision, the Board of Ed has never done much to relieve *de facto* segregation unless pushed. The emphasis has usually been on adding "cultural enrichment" to the minority schools rather than on breaking them up. The missionary approach is well articulated by a writer in *Commentary* (January, 1964):

The draining away of the white middle classes from the public schools could probably be slowed down by the addition of more cultural opportunities to the curriculum. This, in turn, would still the fears of Negro leaders about racial imbalance.

Easier said than done. The best-publicized program along these lines so far is the Higher Horizons program (since 1959), which grew from the Demonstration Guidance program (1956). Demonstration Guidance provided extra reading and math teachers, guidance counsellors, materials, and trips to symphonies, museums, etc. for the more intelligent members of a certain junior high school, with the result that their achievement levels went up considerably, many fewer of them dropped out of high school, and more went to college. But this was only a pilot program which did not reach every child even in the school where it took place. And now that the project is over, that school is depressing to visit: performance seems as low as ever and white children in the neighborhood look for excuses to transfer elsewhere for junior high.

As for the Higher Horizons program, most of the better teachers in the system regard it as a farce. An occasional movie or trip to the museum does not effectively change a child's view of himself or help him learn what he is not learning. And why assume that the official "culture" is truly educational? A Negro teacher told me that the last Higher Horizons film he had taken his class to see was about Jamaica, and every scene depicted Negro servants smilingly waiting on whites. The class didn't like it, though not all of them could say why.

Another enrichment concept is the designation of minority schools as "Special Service" schools. This program involves beefing up school staffs with extra *non-classroom* personnel: psychologists, guidance spe-

cialists, and teacher coordinators. The coordinators supposedly gather special materials, brief teachers on the problems of teaching certain subjects, keep records of individual cases, etc. As a rule the Special Service personnel are resented by other teachers. It's hard to believe that they do a lot of good. Students tend to mistrust the motives of guidance interviewers from class backgrounds different from their own, and to put them on. The NE (non-English) coordinators, who are supposed to help teachers teach Puerto Rican kids English, are not required to know Spanish, and many will explain to you that it's *better* they don't.

It is true, however, that New York has done more for school integration than other cities of comparable size. In Chicago, for example, the Negro sections lie in two long narrow strips, so that it would be easy to pair off overcrowded Negro schools with adjoining white schools. Instead, the school board, as in St. Louis and other cities, prefers to attach portable classrooms to the Negro schools, and this has led to rioting and great bitterness.

Last June, when New York State Commissioner of Education, Dr. James Allen, called for all local Boards of Education to submit plans to end "racial imbalance" in the public schools, the Board of Ed was not unresponsive. On August 23, Superintendent Gross submitted a plan calling for a free transfer program—wherein *any* pupil in a school with a high percentage of minority enrollment might transfer to *any* school with an empty seat for him, transportation supplied by the city. Beyond that Gross announced the pairing of two junior high schools, some limited rezoning, and a number of studies, advisory groups and community cooperation gimmicks.

The civil rights groups were up in arms. They pointed out that at this rate the school system would never be desegregated. Banding together as the Citywide Committee for Integration, they threatened a school boycott unless greater use were made of the techniques for massive rezoning. These included the pairing of elementary schools (the Princeton Plan), the reorganization of junior high feeding patterns, and the building of "educational parks," i.e. clusters of schools either in central locations or on the fringes of the city, to which thousands of children of all ages would be brought by special transportation. Also, the civil rights groups demanded a "timetable," a guarantee that in a given number of years desegregation would be complete. Otherwise, any plan might amount to lip service.

At this point Dr. Gross evidently felt that his professional competence was being challenged. He was not anxious to confer with lay-

men or let them have a voice in the planning. Correspondingly, the rights groups were anxious to make the Board assume full responsibility. But as the boycott loomed nearer, public pressure brought the city administration into the act, and the main combatants were brought together in the office of the City Commission on Human Rights, where they signed an agreement on September 5. The boycott was called off, and in turn the Board of Ed agreed to have a tentative plan for integration by December, 1963, and a final plan by February, 1964. Both plans were to "include provisions for a substantial, realistic and working program of integration in every school district in September, 1964."

In essence the December 3 plan was identical with the August plan: its basic approach was the free transfer program and a study of the Princeton Plan with a view to applying it at some unspecified date to only sixteen schools. There was great stress on beefing up minority schools through special "crash" programs: as a starter, the Board initiated an after-school study center program, to begin immediately, under which some teachers would receive extra pay to help pupils who stayed to do homework or receive extra instruction. As for the timetable, Gross disposed of that with a masterpiece of white liberal rhetoric:

Like other cherished aspirations and ideals of humanity, [the timetable] represents a direction rather than a fixed point, and a general movement upward.

In other words, no timetable.

From that point on, quiet hatred changed to open warfare. Said June Shagaloff, education director of the NAACP,

The Board of Education has simply proceeded as if a commitment did not exist—as if the civil rights movement did not exist—as if the Negro community did not exist.

And Milton Galamison:

Gross' interim plan is like saying we're gonna have you and your wife for dinner but not saying *when*.

The Citywide Committee, led by Galamison, went ahead with boycott plans. In the middle of December and again on December 31, Galamison led picketing and sit-ins at Gross's office which resulted in the arrest of 62 demonstrators. Gross's office—manned by an extremely able public relations staff—made a big show of conferring with "responsible" parent groups, and staged several open meetings to collect "constructive" opinions from civic groups that had already published their opinions.

Meanwhile press and public worked themselves into a frenzy about "bussing," and the notion was widespread that the leaders of the boycott were fanatics who did not really speak for the civil rights organizations.

To open the Free Transfer program, 65,000 questionnaires were sent out to eligible families and only 5,500 applications were returned. Which proved to the Board that Negro parents are interested in improving their neighborhood schools rather than in integration, and to the Committee that it is asking too much to expect individual parents to make exceptions of their kids.

Most teachers feel that the after-school study centers have been a total flop. Both the principals' association and the UFT came out against them. As one Harlem teacher involved in the program told me:

It's bull. It was conceived as a political device to seem to be doing something for integration. But after a month have we received any materials? And those kids who most need to stay don't. Let's face it: what we're running is a baby-sitting service. I suspect that when the warm weather comes, the after-school centers will be empty.

Meanwhile, on January 5 Gross announced to the press—in language worthy of the pentagon—a "saturation program" for minority schools, involving "task forces" of "hand-picked" teachers, who with the cooperation of universities and teachers' colleges would carry out a program of "reading mobilization." Despite the fact that the announcement carried not a word as to finance, training, methods, probable limitations or starting date, *The Times* and *The Post* flipped over it.

NY Times editorial, Jan. 6: The saturation program combines imagination with good sense. In contrast to the political publicity stunts of the school system's critics, it offers a realistic and at the same time dramatic road to improved education for slum children. Such demagogic devices as the projected school boycott and the Public Education Association's "March on Albany" create divisions in the community that impede integration, rather than advance it.

Alas for the PEA! They weren't for the boycott; all they wanted for the schools was money.

III. The Boycotters

The structure of the boycott organization is interesting as a sign of the new forms the Negro movement is taking. The charge that the boycott leadership was not the true Negro leadership was essentially a red herring. The original Committee was formed by the local chapters of the NAACP and CORE, plus the Harlem Parents Committee and

Parents Workshop for Equality (from Brooklyn). The local Urban League went along as a supporting member and later the Committee was joined by Puerto Rican groups also. If the opposition—or the reluctant approval—of national leaders like Roy Wilkins was recorded on the front pages, local leaders could legitimately claim the stronger grass-roots contacts. Besides, men like Philip Randolph and James Farmer supported the boycott from the beginning, as did most other Negro leaders from Jackie Robinson to Martin Luther King. That the national NAACP did not participate as strongly as it might have is an old complaint of local-action projects.

Whether or not the boycott represented the Negro people as a whole is another question. But who does represent the Negro people? Who could? Not necessarily the national civil rights organizations, which for years have been run by small cadres of dedicated people, some of them white, who struggle to collect dues from their rosters of mostly inactive members. Yet to read the papers, and to hear the president of the Board of Education, one would think that the Negro could not be “responsibly” represented unless Booker T. Washington dropped down from heaven for a cup of tea.

Not that the leadership didn’t have its weaknesses, which stemmed from oversimplification both in the boycott’s demands and in the way demands were pressed. Perhaps the most serious lapse was the failure to establish liaisons with liberal or labor groups and to publicize those liaisons. Not until Bayard Rustin joined the Committee just before the February 3 boycott were there any great efforts in this direction. Before then, Galamison specialized in statements like the following:

White people just don’t understand the problem. You hear all this talk about our losing friends, but what friends do we lose? The friends who are only friends as long as things stay the way they are. But I think the white liberal has had to do a lot of thinking in the past year—answer a lot of questions—and when he answers those questions he finds he’s not a liberal after all.

Though there was some truth in this sort of statement, it was not the most useful kind to make. Losing false friends was one thing, but the boycott did not do enough to make positive supporters. As a result, many whites and Negroes alike remained puzzled and gave only passive support.

Of all groups involved the most bewildered and uncertain were the teachers. The boycott leadership made only token efforts to reach them, and up to a week before the boycott they were hopelessly confused and uninformed.

Schoolteachers are especially prone to what used to be called bourgeois individualism—which is the greatest virtue of the best and the most exasperating failure of the mediocre. And so many teachers are mediocrities in the world of adults—timid, stubborn, and prissy. An individualism of petty crankiness is perhaps most pronounced in the Negro teachers, some of whom struggle mightily *not* to think of themselves as Negroes.

Young Negro man teaching kindergarten in Harlem: The unfortunate thing about the black teachers is that they are threatened by these kids—because the teachers themselves have swallowed the middle-class dogma hook, line and sinker.

The UFT was caught in a difficult position. Those of its officers who were sympathetic to the boycott felt they were way ahead of the membership, so far ahead that open support could lead to mutiny and collapse of the union. Besides, relations with the Board of Ed were tenuous, and the UFT leaders wanted to improve them; for they envision a day when the UFT will be an important voice in making educational policy. As indeed it should be, but the effect of such ambition is to pull the teachers away from political action. Consequently, the union straddled the issue, passed a vague motion in favor of integration, and vowed it would defend any teacher penalized beyond loss of a day's pay for his absence on a matter of individual conscience. This stand drew the fire of both sides. The press generally counted the union with the forces of evil, while a group of boycott-minded teachers which tried to force UFT into a position of outright support, was easily outmaneuvered on the floor of the delegate assembly by UFT president Charles Cogen. Afterwards one of the rebel teachers said to me,

Yes, I know the union might be destroyed. So what? What good is this union if it can't take a stand on the most important issue in our whole damn society? Is there anything that could be more relevant to teaching or schools or education? That's the trouble with unions in this country; they can't look beyond the ends of their noses.

By the morning of the boycott, most teachers were sincerely trying to look beyond their noses but not at all sure that the issues were clear to see. Most of those who stayed out did so in observance of the picket line. Many who went in felt a kind of wretchedness they had never before been forced to feel.

IV. The Fizzle

As the crisis developed, Dr. Gross became ill and flew to California. The pre-boycott warfare tended to concentrate on Milton Galamison

and the president of the Board of Education, James Donovan. Donovan soon emerged as a self-righteous type. "This is a Board of Education, not a Board of Transportation or a Board of Integration," he blurted out to reporters. Later he wrote a letter saying he was misquoted and sent it to the leaders of national, not local, organizations.

Galamison for his part took strong moral positions, but remained fuzzy as to details. It was up to the experts to work out the details, he said; the advice of his group had been consistently rejected anyway. His positions on the two most frequent objections to the boycott were candid and sharp and right as far as they went, but they didn't go far enough to lift debate out of the circular tail-chasing it soon settled into.

Galamison on bussing: Anyose who says he's in favor of integration *and* the neighborhood school is a liar—he's in favor of segregation. This whole subject of bussing has been caricatured and exaggerated by these same anti-Negro values that created segregation in the first place. We bus blind kids, retarded kids, handicapped kids, 15,000 Open Enrollment kids, and thousands of private and parochial school kids. We're not against bussing, we're against the Negro.

Galamison in answer to the objection that segregated schools can't change until housing is desegregated: If you're gonna say you need housing first, well—to get comparable housing, you gotta have comparable income; to get comparable income, you gotta have comparable training; to get comparable training, you gotta have comparable *education*—and here the schools are turning out thousands of retarded Negro children each year! So you can't start with housing.

There is obviously something rhetorical about these statements. They are not necessarily the words of a man who wants to bus every Negro child, but the words of a leader fighting an enemy who he knows from experience will not even admit he's under attack, let alone move an inch, until he's hit with every weapon one can command.

While the February plan was being drawn up, a sincere if belated effort might have been made to give the civil rights groups representation among those responsible for the planning of school integration. Instead Donovan chose to confirm their opinion of him.

Donovan on TV: The grave danger here has been that the responsible leaders . . . are having their leadership threatened by some irresponsible publicity seekers.

Donovan to press: [The Board of Ed] is doing more than those who are advocating freedom now and integration now. [Civil rights leaders are] dealing in jingles [instead of] constructive, practical plans.

The more Donovan insisted that the boycott leaders were irresponsible, the more he convinced them that only the most extreme demands could bring worthwhile results. The only positive event in the final stages of preboycott hostilities was the entrance of Bayard Rustin, Coordinator of the March on Washington, who evidently decided that if this boycott was going to occur, it would be better off with him than without him. He gave the boycott exactly what it lacked: an organizational efficiency which got signs made, statements issued, propaganda mimeographed, volunteers directed. Also Rustin's attitude toward the boycott itself was different from Galamison's, as we shall see.

The Board's final plan was supposed to be announced on February 1, and if it were unacceptable the boycott was scheduled for February 3, the first day of the new semester. Galamison, in order to keep the various member groups of the boycott organizations together, had reluctantly agreed that the boycott would last one day only—would be, in effect, a demonstration rather than a reprisal. Only if the boycott failed to produce significant changes would it be repeated. Donovan, meanwhile, staunchly resisted all attempts to bring the disputing parties together again. Jumping the gun on the February deadline, he took the whole Board on TV January 29 to explain the new plan directly to the people.

The essence of the new "first plan" (as it was mysteriously called) was that 10 out of 31 segregated junior highs and 20 out of 134 segregated elementary schools would be Princeton-planned, and a definite and quick timetable was announced for this. Also, specific efforts would be made to eliminate double-sessions, overcrowding, and school construction in segregated neighborhoods.

This plan drew attack from both sides. The boycotters pointed out that it would leave the bulk of the ghetto schools untouched. The American Jewish Congress—which has been offering "constructive" integration plans since 1957—stated that at least 83 segregated elementary schools could be paired immediately. On the other side, an organization called Parents and Taxpayers prepared to go to court to save neighborhood schools and the purity of their children. Some newspapers criticized Donovan and the Board for going beyond Gross; anonymous board members were quoted to the effect that it would be impossible to carry out this new plan, that there was no money to finance it, and that when the paired schools were announced in March there would be hell to pay.

And the boycott was on. "Even if you don't understand the situation," Galamison appealed, "give us the benefit of the doubt." Few people, black or white, fully understood the aims of the boycott.

No one knew what to expect; boycott leaders were predicting 50,000 absences and were ready to call that a victory. In a bit of brilliant improvisation, Galamison when interviewed on TV pledged that his demonstrators would remain nonviolent, but warned that nonviolent action often attracts "sociopaths" to the scene. The only remedy was for parents to keep their children home. Donovan played right into his hands. Instead of responding with a guarantee of safety for all children attending school, he ranted that he would hold Galamison "personally and criminally responsible" if any child, Negro or white, were injured during the boycott.

On boycott day, whether from principle, fear of injury, or a natural desire to take the day off, 364,000 pupils stayed home. Donovan, missing no opportunity to put his foot in his mouth, was quick to announce that the boycott had been "a fizzle." While the newspapers began deciding he was "not the right man for the job," Donovan was announcing that the boycott would make absolutely no difference in the Board's program or policy. And the civil rights groups began to argue among themselves about just when and how they would take further action.

V. The Aftereffects

What effects did the boycott have? In terms of Negro self-respect, undoubtedly positive. In terms of its own objectives, too, it was successful, forcing a more definite integration plan than the Board of Ed would ever have volunteered. But in other areas the effects were moot.

The Schools

Anyone who knows anything about the New York schools cannot help but be uneasy about the gap between the strategy of the boycott and the situation it attacks. The issue is by no means so simple as Galamison often made it out to be:

We feel that if we desegregate the public schools, these other problems—like overcrowding, low curriculum, etc.—will go away. Like when you have an injection, and you take a shot of penicillin.

One problem that will not go away is that of money. In the 1964-65 state budget, New York City, which has 34% of the state's school-children, is slated to receive only 25% of total state aid to schools. Due in part to the machinations of a rurally-dominated state legislature, the City and its residents pay 49.7% of all state taxes and get back only 37.3% in benefits. The rationale for low school aid is that New York has an abundance of taxable property with which to finance its schools; the catch is that the City also has stupendous upkeep expenses.

To be specific, the value of taxable property per pupil in New York City is \$31,878, far above the state average of \$26,600; and it is this ratio on which state aid is based. But whereas City taxes amount to \$54.27 per \$1000 of property valuation, the City spends \$39.39 of that money for municipal purposes and only \$14.88 for schools—which compares poorly with what is spent by surrounding districts. Even though the City tax rate is high, moreover, funds collected are minimized by the gross undervaluation of property holdings. Real estate in New York's five boroughs is currently valued at the bargain total of \$35 billion; theoretically Manhattan is worth only \$13.5 billion—but don't try to buy it if that's all you can raise. Furthermore, much of the non-school bite on New York's property taxes goes to pay for problems that only large cities have—such as the costs of tearing up streets and assigning extra police to direct traffic when property owners decide to pull down or put up new buildings for their private profit. And since current property taxes don't entirely cover the costs of municipal overburden, the City shifts the load to the public in regressive taxes such as the 4% city sales tax.

Financial shortages drastically affect the operation of the schools. According to a study of the New York schools sponsored jointly by the PEA and the UFT, "30% of the daily instructional staff is made up of substitutes and other persons on similar temporary or emergency status." The schools are short by 27,500 permanent staff members, including 12,500 "professionals," who would be required to bring the City up to the *average only* of the school districts among which it once enjoyed leadership. That leadership position was held in the early 1940's, before suburban flight began in earnest, when the City spent more per child than its suburbs did. Now it spends \$200 per child less, which amounts to about \$200,000 per school and a total of \$200 million per year simply to bring the system up to par in staff, materials, textbooks and upkeep. The \$200 million does not include extra funds urgently needed for new construction.

At present, there is not enough room, time, or personnel to take care of all the children. A major classroom problem is that one or two children can disrupt an entire class and dissipate most of the teacher's energy; and as one might expect, difficult children are more prevalent in slum schools. According to one assistant principal,

It's the 2-3% who are unteachable and uncontrollable—the ones with very deep emotional disturbances—who take so much time and trouble in the lower neighborhood schools. There's no place to put them. We can't even assign them to a "600" [special problems] school without their parents' permission. The "600" schools have no more room anyway.

Sooner or later these kids are caught committing a serious crime: you send them to a judge and he sends them right back to school.

There are also curriculum problems which integration will not necessarily solve. One of the most controversial is the practice of grouping the children according to reading level, and later, IQ test, so that fast, "achieving" children are in a homogeneous group entirely separate from the classrooms of the slow, "non-achieving" youngsters. One of the effects of such grouping is that in schools where a small population of whites remains, it is in effect segregated vertically in the advanced classrooms. So transporting kids from their neighborhoods will not by itself guarantee them an integrated classroom experience; in fact, since most Negro children lag in classroom skills, it might not do them much good to be thrown in with white children of their own grade level—at least not without drastic changes in the present set-up. Most experts now agree, however, that homogeneous grouping leads to stereotyping of individuals and is not desirable on the grade school level. To quote Martin Mayer, "in New York, Wrightstone's study of comparative performance showed no significant advantage for bright kids grouped with their fellows over bright kids scattered through the school at random." But experts also agree that heterogeneous groupings cannot effectively be taught unless class size is reduced to no more than 15 children, a procedure which would require twice as many classrooms and teachers. For the present, boycotters might take some satisfaction in a provision of the February integration plan, wherein the Board agreed to eliminate IQ tests.

Also beyond the reach of the boycott is the teacher herself, who is often unaware of her middle-class attitudes and the damage they do her ability to teach. I remember one young teacher with an all-Negro "slow" 1st grade, extremely conscientious and worried that she is not more successful, yet unaware that her tone of voice is superior and humorless. At any given moment, only about five of her children are paying attention, and at least three-quarters of the words she utters are devoted to discipline. Let me give some flavor of her monologue:

. . . well, why did you raise your hand if you had a pencil? I asked for only those who didn't have pencils to raise hands! That's not funny, Wilma! That's not funny! Boys and girls, we're not getting our work done and if we don't settle down we won't be able to have recess today. **NOW I WON'T HAVE ANY MORE TALKING IN THIS ROOM!** I'll start over again . . . we draw two lines across and that's the big *A*. Now I see that Freddy didn't hear me, Becky didn't hear me, Nicholas didn't hear me, Roger didn't hear me. And you're not looking! You can't learn

to make the big *A* unless you're looking! Now can you make a big *A*? Let's see if you can. Raise hands if you need help. You don't have paper? Deborah, where is your paper? All right, I'll give you more . . .

After twenty minutes, a majority of the children are making big *A*'s. As the teacher starts on the little *a*, I do what most of the kids want desperately to join me in: escape.

To give you an idea of these kids six years later, here is the teacher of a 7th-grade English class.

Now take a sheet of lined paper and write at the top "English notes." I want all of you to copy down right this second the facts I'm going to give you. Norman, would you be so kind as to put your hand down. Now your assignment is going to deal with this, so get these facts accurately. Hurry up, I haven't got too much time.

The Whites

Naturally the boycott did nothing to ease the growing anxiety of white middle-class parents. If many more of them withdraw their children, there will be no question of integration.

At an open meeting of a district school board, a white mother stood up and shouted hysterically,

What are you going to give me to keep my child in the public school system? I've worked for the NAACP for years, but I don't want 300 years of wrong to weigh upon the shoulders of *my 5-year-old*!

The woman went on screaming while her listeners applauded her. It was some time before she could be quieted. Whereupon Mrs. Thelma Johnson, who was onstage as a representative of the Harlem Parents Committee, made the following reply:

I offer you your child's future. Because your child's future and my child's future are bound up together. You cannot accept the privilege of being superior because you're white any damn more than I can accept the stigma of being inferior because I'm Negro. How much longer must I prove to be your superior in order to be accepted as an equal? Bussing is worth it for me because I'm on the lower end. You have to decide if it's worth it for you.

Mrs. Johnson, too, was applauded.

The Negroes

Neither did the boycott clear up the confusion among those Negroes who had, as requested, given the civil rights organizations "the benefit of the doubt." Among the children of a certain Harlem school that was

empty on boycott day, there was great fear of "integration," for rumor had it that white kids were coming to fight the black kids.

Negro parents, for their part, might well wonder what changes a boycott might make in the depressing economic conditions they face. It would seem, too, that for some the boycott only reinforced doubts as to the value of nonviolent protest in general. Though the Negro in the United States has been historically nonviolent in relations with his white oppressors, nonviolence is by no means the lesson he learns from the life around him.

6th-grade Harlem boy (F): Fable

Once a boy was standing on a huge metal flattening machine. The flattener was coming down slowly. Now this boy was a boy who loved insects and bugs. The boy could have sopped the machine from coming down but there were two ladie bugs on the button and in order to push the button he would kill the two ladie bugs. The flattener was about a half inch over his head now he made a decision he would have to kill the ladie bugs he quickly pressed the button. The machine stoped he was saved and the ladie bugs were dead.

MORAL: smash or be smashed.

Or, as one of the fable-teller's female classmates puts it:

I think the white people should stop taking advantage of the color people before they get punched in the face.

The boycott was a punch thrown off-balance: it brought on all the reaction to a punch in the face without gaining enough of its satisfaction.

VI. Boycott and Politics

6th-grade West Harlem boy (F): How come we don't have no Negro president! We have to strike for president! We ain't gonna pay no more taxes!

His teacher: We've got to keep these kids from exploding ten years from now when they grow up and can't get jobs.

One of the conspicuous failings of the boycott was its lack of political content. It was a beautiful example of what Tom Kahn in the last issue of *DISSENT* calls "project-centered provincialism" based on "a middle-class integrationist ideology." It made no attempts to connect itself with the Rent Strike that was gaining headway in Harlem at the time, nor did it seek identification with efforts to end job discrimination.

When Bayard Rustin made his last-minute entrance into the boycott organization, he tried to broaden the perspective. Speaking at a

rally January 31, he reminded his listeners that the Negro is at the center of all America's problems; for if America is to solve them, "the lowest must come first."

In a country with 50 million poor, only the black people are in movement. But we black people cannot by ourselves solve the problems of housing, unemployment and schools. The only solution is for the working classes to forge a *political* movement.

The trouble with demonstrations for limited ends is that the "power structure" can easily afford a compromise which will soon be absorbed in the shifting sands of our profit-controlled economy, without much damage to the status quo. No matter how firmly demonstrators insist that they will not compromise within their area of attack, complete change of one institution is not possible unless other institutions are also transformed.

The unemployment crisis indicates a natural alliance between the Negro and the labor movement: they must jointly demand full-scale public works programs to construct race- and class-integrated schools and housing, even whole new decentralized cities. Also, the Negro has a natural basis for alliance with those liberals who fear the military-industrial complex: they must jointly demand that a substantial portion of the annual multi-billion defense budget be diverted for education and social reconstruction. Until the problem is understood and attacked on this scale, the local projects of the Negro movement cannot achieve their full objectives.

And yet there was a "revolutionary" ardor to the boycott that went beyond political programs. I say "revolutionary" because at times the driving figures behind the boycott spoke with that appetite for pure destruction which far exceeds the reasoned desire for social reform. It comes from the feeling that the society one lives in is so hopelessly corrupt that one's only recourse is to tear the whole thing down. Let me quote the girl who warned of "a punch in the face":

If I could change my block I would stand on Madison Ave and throw nothing but Teargas in it. I would have all the people I liked to get out of the block and then I would become very tall and have big hands and with my big hands I would take all of the narcartic people and pick them up with my hand and throw them in the nearest river and Oceans. I would go to some of those old smart alic cops and throw them in the Oceans and Rivers too. I would let the people I like move into the projects so they could tell their friends that they live in a decent block. If I could do this you would never see 117 st again.

At times Galamison, the Presbyterian minister who sends his own

son to a private school and drives an expensive car, made statements that would have done justice to Cromwell or Lenin. The most quoted of these was inspired by the radio interviewer who asked him if there was a chance that the integration conflict might destroy the public school system. Replied the Reverend,

I would rather see it destroyed. Maybe it has run its course anyway, the public school system.

By contrast, Bayard Rustin knows what he wants, and hopes against hope it will come about peacefully.

I think we are on the threshold of a new political movement—and I do not mean it in the party sense—that is going to change the face of New York in housing, in jobs and in schools.

After the success of the boycott, however, the only “new political movement” in the offing was a national group coordinating school boycotts in big cities across the nation. If such a development gains further momentum, the civil rights movement will continue divided against itself, exhausting itself in desperate forays.

VII. Society and the Classroom

The subject of New York’s schools and what’s wrong with them cannot entirely be discussed in terms of more cash, more teaching and more integration. What is needed for the classroom above all else is a free and democratic, truly revolutionary society based on human value instead of compulsive striving, competition and accumulation. I doubt, for instance, that there is a single public school in this country where children are given a chance to learn at their individual rates of speed and without grading. Even at best our schools educate our young to fit into a world where ability is measured by quantity only. Concepts of art, science, knowledge, creativity *for their own sake* survive at kindergarten level only; the purpose of an American education is to replace these values with symbols of measure. What can be said of a society which reduces its culture to True-False and multiple-choice tests even on the college level? Among other things, that this society rewards cheating, and that the more advanced the competitors the more extensive and complex the cheating will become, until the cheaters finally cheat themselves of the knowledge of what they are doing.

Our ideal should be schools in which each child can develop as an individual, according to his capacities and desires. A good teacher is someone with a talent for getting through to children and letting them get through to him. If a teacher doesn’t in some way enjoy being

alive he has nothing to teach. What we need is to replace the authoritarian teacher who has traditionally plagued and scourged the children, whether black or white, achievers, nonachievers, or underachievers. We need a teacher who will nourish talent and individuality rather than crush it.

Unfortunately, teaching attracts types who enjoy relations where they have undisputed superiority. Thus the effort to "understand the disadvantaged child" turns out in practice to be the science of patronizing the slum-child without feeling guilty about it. For the disadvantaged child, of course, is really not that at all, no matter what it helps one to know about his background: he is a person, and as such something splendid in his own right even before a teacher gets to him.

In every ghetto school I visited, teachers recommended a book called *The Culturally Deprived Child* by Frank Riessman. Reading this book, they told me, had helped them to understand the nature of the children they had to deal with. Sure enough, I found Riessman's book preaching "a sympathetic, noncondescending, understanding of the culture of the underprivileged." But neither Riessman nor the average teacher realizes how un-noncondescending sympathy delivered from the top can be:

Moreover, self-expression and self-actualization, other aims of education, particularly modern education, are equally alien to the more pragmatic, traditional, underprivileged person.

No! You just can't talk that way about a child entering elementary school. Kids from "underprivileged" homes want to express themselves and realize themselves just as much as anyone else. Maybe the most important thing for them is to have a teacher who will *expect* something from them, let them know there is some authority who cares. The best teacher I met in Harlem had taken a class of bright 6th graders who up to that time were demoralized and undisciplined. Fortunately he did not assume they weren't interested in self-expression. He assumed that they had something to express, the fruits of their own experience, which is in so many ways deeper and more demanding than that of middle-class children. It was a long haul, after eleven years of neglect, but eventually he got them writing and writing well. He read them French translations and they wrote him parables and fables; it seems Negro children are natural-born fable-writers, for—as we have seen—they are not likely to pull their punches when it comes to the moral. He read them Greek myths and stories, and they wrote him back their own myths, classic transformations, and one boy even wrote an illustrated history of the Trojan War. (One of the transformations begins, "I was transformed from a poor little

infant into a nice boy, and as I grew I was transformed into a magnificent extraordinary deceiving nuisance to the world.") Most of the children wrote novels, and one 11-year-old boy, without having read a single modern novel, began a remarkable autobiography with the sentence, "I am dreaming and crying in my sleep."

This was an ordinary 6th-grade Harlem class; there were some high IQ's, but it was not an "SP" (specially gifted) class and had attracted no special attention to itself. The teacher disciplined them, yes, kept them in order, but did it not to triumph but to show them he cared. He respected them, which is something you can't learn from books. He visited their homes, which is absolutely unheard-of. He worked patiently with each child, and got them to work with each other.

Now it is a year later, the kids are dispersed into a notoriously depressing junior high, and most of them have lost what they gained. Some are flunking; their former teacher bitterly wonders how the life in them can survive. But for that one year they produced a body of work uniquely theirs.

VIII. The Grouping of Groupings

If conditions within the classroom are bad enough, to look beyond them is to find oneself in a jungle of stumbling and makeshift, where stentorian voices boom from the tops of trees, and clusters of officious missionaries rush about distributing memoranda on the cannibal problem.

First of all, there is the school bureaucracy. According to Martin Mayer, "New York City employs more people in educational administration than all of France." I believe I have alluded to the public relations men on the Board of Ed staff, but I have perhaps failed to mention the endless associations, commissions, sub-commissions, advisory committees, deputy directors, associate supervisors, district superintendents, coordinators, directors, foundations and independent consultants who must be involved in every policy decision. The trouble with such a set-up is that the basic concern on every level points up, toward impressing the higher-ups, rather than down, toward serving the classroom teacher. Would it be heresy to suggest equal salary for every school position? With the present system, the classroom teacher can be in a panic for materials she ordered three years ago, while the assistant superintendent is sincerely assuring the area superintendent that everything is all right in his sub-sector. In such a bureaucracy, the people who move toward the top are the yes-men, the round pegs, whom the public pays to rise away from the children. They have a priority on operating funds, too; if they could not get their paperwork properly

submitted and filed, the system would collapse. In fact, despite the teacher shortage, there are a number of employees listed on the Board of Ed budget as classroom teachers who never report to their assigned schools; they are clerks and typists working in the central offices. Ironically, the policy directives they type, like great portions of our public school funds, may never filter down to the classroom; but they do reach the publicity department, from which they are carefully distributed to the newspapers, which in turn describe to us a school system that doesn't really quite exist. Nevertheless, its paper achievements will be proudly recounted by the functionary flown to a conference of "educators" at public expense. Life in the big city goes on somehow, though where it goes no one knows.

The gap between theory and practice is nowhere more striking than among the school principals. Many of them know little of what goes on in their own schools and make no effort to learn. The job of the principal is to spend his time in educational conferences, or addressing committees, or preparing reports for higher-ups who never come to check. At the Harlem school where the 6th-grade "slow" letters I have quoted were written, the principal assured me,

I don't notice any demoralization on this level. The children are happy, well-behaved and eager to learn.

Small wonder that one of the best teachers at this school could not get enthusiastic about the boycott:

What if the boycotters are successful and get the Board to come up with a plan? Who has to implement it but these same shits!

Then there is the problem of the teachers themselves and their organization, the UFT. It would be unkind to expect too much of an organization so urgently needed and besieged with such difficulties as is the UFT. But it must be said that an excessive concern of teachers black and white is their own respectability. The most pressing practical issues are submerged in the desire to preserve their "professional image." For instance, a teacher's license in New York City cannot be obtained unless the applicant has passed the expensive and utterly idiotic education courses offered at teachers' colleges. I never talked to a single good teacher who claimed to have learned anything of value in these courses. Furthermore, they discourage many of the specially talented people gathered in New York City from seeking employment as public school teachers. Bright, educated people who want to try their hands at teaching children can't, not in New York, not even if they have PhD's, unless they are willing to go back to school for their "education

credits.”* Yet the union, although ambitious to work out a joint recruiting program with the Board aimed at attracting Negro teachers from the South, shows little interest in this question. The current teachers’ pay scale is based on these pointless credits, and to upset it would invalidate years of useless course-taking.

Finally, there is the conglomeration of civil rights groups, divided and sub-divided within itself, spreading out towards too many separate targets with only the most general slogans to hold itself together. The structure of the rights organizations is chaotic beyond description. Let me say simply that the end effect is too often the mirror image of the bureaucracy they are arrayed against. And the boycott offered no program for the Negro children to realize their own particular talents, no social-action program with which to unite the Negro community in self-respect. Was not the boycott in some sense one more appeal to the great white father to do right by his poor black children?

IX. No Ending

Have I captured the confusion? Here is New York City with a mass of black people, most of whom have never been allowed to partake of our civilization. Now they must be allowed that dubious privilege; for there is no other place for them. In previous eras of American life, there was some room for a variegated lower class, which took care of the dirty work and was not permitted entrance into the cultural mainstream. Little by little most groups surfaced into the middle class, leaving behind among unlucky remnants of themselves a permanent body of American Negroes, who, handicapped by years of slavery and oppression, remained what a Negro teacher describes to me as “a colonial people encapsulated *within* the colonial country.” But now automation is chopping away at the colony; we see the natives in the street, shaking their fists. We must open the door and let them in.

The big question is, will they come in having truly changed and purified and reformed our social structure, as some say they must? Will we have to chip away at our stone walls to let them in, as the Trojans did for the Greek horse? Or will the Negro scrape through bloody, bitter and confused, ready to perpetuate the authoritarian ethic he has so far, to his unique credit, managed to evade?

The answer to this question depends in part on our schools. But all school systems are—and have always been—failures. Even Leo Tolstoy,

* Education courses are not the only obstacles in the paths of potentially valuable teachers. Teachers from the South or from Puerto Rico with advanced academic degrees may find themselves disqualified on the interview section of the teachers’ license exam for “speaking English with an accent.”

with all his genius, his wealth, his command, and with not a single bureaucrat to hamper him, could not educate his peasants into free men. His failure, our failure . . . the failure is always the same: the failure to educate each man—not for a prestigious “function” or “role”—but to fulfill his own capacities for living, for being alive, for finding and making his own kind of beauty, for respecting the diversity of life without, in his frustration, turning to violence, self-suppression, and the worship of authority.

So what the boycotters are demanding, ultimately (and more power to them!) is a change in the nature of the lives we lead.

6th-grade Harlem girl (S): I wish that the hold city can chage. and that the governor make new laws. that there to be no dirt on streets and no gobeck top off and wish that my name can chage and I wish that whether can trun to summer.

6th-grade Harlem boy (F): Fable

Once upon a time there was two men who were always fighting so one day a wise man came along and said fighting will never get you anywhere they didn't pay him no attention and they got in quarrels over and over again. So one day they went to church and the preacher said you should not fight and they got mad and knock the preacher out

Can't find no ending.

March 1, 1964

Jeremy Larner recently won the Delta Prize for his novel Drive, He Said, which will be published in August. Judges were Leslie Fiedler, Mary McCarthy, and Walter van Tilburg Clark.

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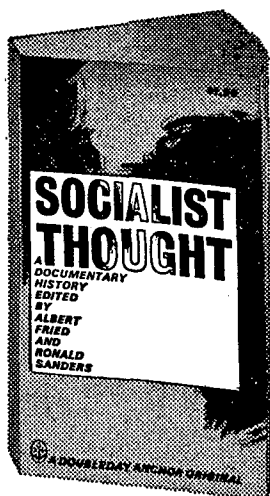
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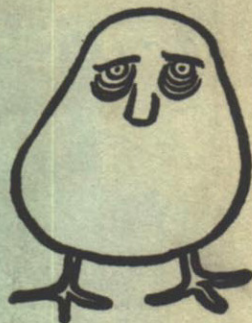
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